

**BETRAYED!  
LABOUR AND THE  
CULTURAL ELITE**

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**THE NEW GOLDRUSH  
WHO WANTS TO BE  
A MILLIONAIRE?**

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**OZWALD BOATENG  
THE PEACOCK  
OF SAVILE ROW**

MAGAZINE

# THE INDEPENDENT

Saturday 23 May 1998 70p (IR70p) No 3,618

Indonesia's new president moves to stamp his authority by removing protesters from parliament building

## Jakarta: troops take on students

By Richard Lloyd Parry and  
Stephen Vines in Jakarta

SCORES of Indonesian troops advanced into Jakarta's parliament complex late last night, trying to clear it of the thousands of students who have occupied it for the last few days.

The army action was the first indication that the new government of former vice-president Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie had lost its patience with the demands by the student movement for democracy, and a line was being drawn after Thursday's resignation of President Suharto. Mr Habibie named a cabinet yesterday that removed some of those closest to the former president, but left many of the old guard in place.

Lines of armed troops moved into the complex at about 11.30pm local time and hundreds of students fled from the grounds into the main parliament building. Troops used a loudspeaker to call on the students to leave the complex peacefully.

The students have been in the complex since Tuesday, first demanding the ousting of former president Suharto and then that of his successor, Mr Habibie. There was no immediate violence but there was great tension. Students had gathered in the lobby of the main parliament building, pulling on their university blazers and linking arms.

"We will not give in, we will not run away," said Andi, one of the students. "The military is going against the wishes of the people. We cannot allow this. We will stay and fight."

All the roads around the parliament building were sealed off, as the army grouped to reclaim the building from the demonstrators who have been roaming around it without re-



Protesters standing on top of parliament buildings in Jakarta this week; soldiers moved in last night to clear thousands of students who had occupied the complex. Photograph: David Gray

straint, chanting slogans against the Suharto regime, and daubing them on the walls.

Earlier in the day there had been a stand-off between Muslim demonstrators who appeared at the building and told the students to put an end to

their demonstrations. That confrontation ended peacefully, but was apparently a warning of more serious action to come.

That action appeared in the form of Green Berets from the Strategic Reserve, who brought empty trucks into which the stu-

dents could expect to be man-handled. "Disperse, disperse!" the military police shouted, carrying M-16 rifles, truncheons and tear-gas canisters.

The military chose a moment to act when divisions had started appearing among the stu-

dents, and when they were presumably exhausted after days of protest. Nevertheless singing could be heard inside the building as the army waited outside.

Marjuki Darusman, the vice-chairman of the National Committee on Human Rights, said

"It's very surprising that it's happened like this. General Wirant [the army chief] said today that they should end the demonstration but it was no more than a hint. It wasn't an ultimatum."

The new Indonesian cabinet has a substantial military pres-

ence – six serving or retired army generals – as well as six prominent Muslim figures. Most are members of the ruling Golkar party who may now be hoping to serve until 2003, when Mr Habibie will finish serving Suharto's term.

The players can still ask to use the Three Lions emblem for personal deals and the FA insists authorisation is given in nine out of 10 cases. But the

players believe they should not have to seek permission first. A senior FA official said yesterday:

"No one wants to call the England players greedy... but they

also have to have a sense of responsibility to the official

sponsors and to the game itself."

We will not be giving in."

## Landslide predicted for 'Yes' vote



Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president, with constituents after voting in Belfast yesterday. Photograph: Brian Harris

By David McKittrick  
Irish Correspondent

SUPPORTERS of a "Yes" vote in Ireland's double referendums last night predicted a convincing win of more than 70 per cent.

Voters came out in enormous numbers in Northern Ireland, with observers in some areas reporting local turnouts exceeding 90 per cent. The belief is that a high vote will help the "Yes" camp.

A senior nationalist politician said: "Some have been calling it the Good Friday agreement and some call it the Belfast Agreement. I believe that after this vote it will be the people's agreement."

The result in the Irish Republic, where a parallel referendum was held yesterday, is

Unionist Party MP who has been prominent in the "No" camp, claimed a majority of Protestants would not support the accord. He said: "The mood today is definitely anti-agreement. People have been sickened by the pressure from outside Northern Ireland and many of those who were voting 'Yes' when the campaign started have decided otherwise."

Most observers, however, say they have detected a clear swing towards a "Yes" vote in the final few days of the campaign, with some of the most optimistic on the "Yes" side believing that something close to a landslide could be on the cards.

The result in the Irish Republic, where a parallel referendum was held yesterday, is

regarded as an utterly foregone conclusion, with scarcely a "No" voter to be found. The turnout, though high, is however expected to be lower than in the north.

Unless the northern "Yes" vote percentage reaches the upper 70s, there will be sharp controversy over whether a majority of Unionists have endorsed the accord. The loyalist "No" campaigners claim that a "Yes" vote of 74 per cent is needed to demonstrate a pro-agreement Unionist majority, but this is contested by most commentators as an unreasonably high figure.

Some 1,175,000 people were entitled to vote, putting an X in "Yes" or "No" boxes beside the question: "Do you support the agreement reached at the multi-party talks on Northern

Ireland and set out in Command Paper 3883?"

The ballot-papers from 583 locations throughout Northern Ireland will be taken to the King's Hall in south Belfast where counting is to begin at 9am today. A result is expected by early afternoon.

The Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, said in Dublin: "I am glad it is a high poll. One of the things that bothered democratic politicians over the years was that we couldn't find a structured way to get a democratic framework to the people to vote on. We have tried that in the last 30 years, the last 75 years. This is their opportunity to influence events. It is an appointment that the Irish people have with history."

## Sinatra has it his way from beyond the grave

By Andrew Marshall  
in Washington

FRANK SINATRA'S will ensures that the battle for his inheritance will be bitterly fought for a long time, but the battle will be conducted in secret.

In an effort to head off arguments, he added a condition that anyone who contests the document will be disinherited. So disagreements over the division of the estate, estimated at \$200m (£122m), between his widow and children are virtually guaranteed to remain below the surface. But with his records still

selling a million a year, lucrative back catalogues and rights to the name and the familiar, the fight is likely to go on for years.

The will, disclosed on Thursday, shows that the bulk of the estate went to his widow, Barbara, who inherited all his property, including homes in Beverly Hills, Malibu and Palm Springs. She also got all the silverware, paintings and books, a Mercedes and a Rolls, and 25 per cent of his other personal belongings. The 1991 will guarantees that she will receive at least \$3.5m.

The children, Francis Jr, and

Tina and Nancy, each received cash bequests of \$200,000, which seems a small amount for a man who was worth millions. But lawyers cautioned that the bulk of his estate had already been put into a trust fund. This would cover the majority of the royalties and much of his investments. Frank Jr was also left his father's sheet music.

There have long been rumours of clashes between family members, and the details of the will stoked further speculation of a row over the division of the estate. But without knowing how much is in the trust, and

how it is divided, it is hard to know who ends up with exactly what.

The children are known to have clashed repeatedly with their stepmother, Barbara, whom Frank married in 1976.

Tina, the most outspoken of the three, has led them in clashes over the rights to Sinatra's music, and Tina and Barbara also fought over the design of a Frank Sinatra de, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Tina wanted it to figure the younger Frank; Barbara wanted the older, greyer man. Tina won, but the tie didn't do very well any-

way. The children control the Reprise Records catalogue, which covers Sinatra's career from 1960 to 1988. But Barbara benefits from the 1993 deal with Capitol Records.

Sinatra's first wife, Nancy, was left \$250,000 in cash, and he also left an extra \$1m to a trust fund established in 1983 for his grandchildren.

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9 770951 948566

### Today's news

#### Everest slips

#### from reach

Stephen Goodwin comes within 100m of the peak of Everest, separated by a narrow crest and that awkward rocky barrier, the Hillary Step.

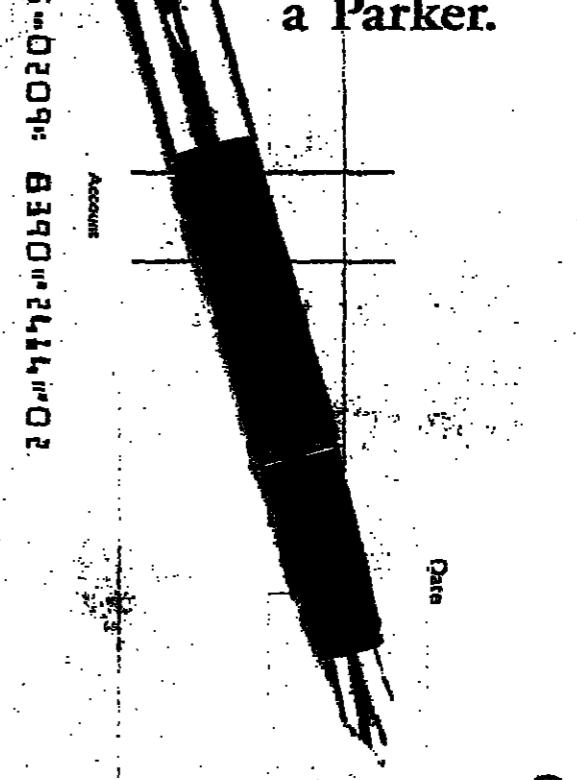
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#### CJD claims

A total of eight families who lost relatives to CJD following treatment with human growth hormone yesterday won the right to claim compensation from the Government.

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Now you  
don't have to  
put pen to  
paper to own  
a Parker.



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FRONTIER

From £6.75 to £18.99

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THE PARKER FRONTIER RANGE IS AVAILABLE AT SELECTED BRANCHES OF W.H. SMITH, WHSmith, JOHN MENZIES, THE PEN SHOP, TESCO BOOTS, STAPLES U.K., RYMAN, OFFICE WORLD AND OTHER GOOD STATIONERS

IN TOMORROW'S  
INDEPENDENT  
ON SUNDAY

■ Ulster decides  
Full reports and  
analysis as the result  
of the peace  
referendum is  
announced

■ Private  
dancers  
The new generation  
of friendly  
neighbourhood strip  
joints

■ Win £1,000...  
to spend on  
contemporary art in  
an easy-to-enter  
competition  
celebrating the  
NatWest Art Prize

■ Get a grip  
Is stress just nature's  
way of telling you to  
pull yourself  
together?

■ Smarty pants  
Terrific trousers for  
the summer

■ A history of sex  
Andres Serrano's latest  
controversial  
exhibition

IN MONDAY'S  
INDEPENDENT

■ Glamour  
offensive  
David Usborne sees  
the cash-strapped  
RSC put New York  
on celebrity fund-  
raising overdrive

■ Stop messin'  
about!  
The BBC puts  
Kenneth Williams'  
reputation on the  
line



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Sport	Time Off
Crosswords	Time Off B.26
TV & radio	The Eye

# Ulster queues up to say 'Yes'

Voters  
turn out  
in record  
numbers

By Kim Sengupta  
in Belfast

THE ONLY person the Rev Ian Paisley bowed over in Belfast yesterday was a member of a television crew. She was knocked down by a car when the media turned up in force to watch him cast his vote in the referendum. It was, we think, a "No".

Mr Paisley made the usual noises about the agreement being a betrayal of the Union etc. But he was all rather grim – the only flash of colour was his Union flag tie with hearts and the word "NO", which had been designed by his daughter. To many present, the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party was sounding like a rattle in an increasingly empty can.

Voters turned out in record numbers to exercise their rights to take part in Ulster's most important poll in 30 years. They queued up patiently outside polling stations even before they had opened.

Gerry Adams, looking statesmanlike, cast his vote in west Belfast. "Christ, another new suit!" said a Sinn Fein official as Mr Adams adjusted the knot of his red, patterned tie which went with his blue shirt and grey suit.

Mr Adams' supporters shouted his name, then he waved to them. It was quite a presidential wave. "Fifty per cent plus one is a majority," said Mr Adams. "That's all that's needed. It must be made to work. That's the challenge facing Mr Blair."

Apart from an unmarked car that cruised by, the RUC had kept away from the polling station, unlike the station where Mr Paisley went to vote.

Also present was the High Commissioner for Namibia, Ben Uenga who, as a member of the South West African People's Organisation, had taken part in his country's liberation struggle against the forces of apartheid. He was here to observe the referendum. His view was that there would be a sizeable "Yes" vote. He had carried out his own little vox pop by walking around the streets asking people.

David Trimble voted at Lur-



A policeman, armed with a sub-machine-gun, stands guard outside a polling station in Falls Road, west Belfast.

Photograph: Brian Harris

gan, County Antrim, and then had to walk down the Shankill Road. He looked more confident and relaxed than he had for a long time, and got a warm welcome. The gloomy prognosis of a massive rejection of the peace settlement has lifted, and he was predicting that a 70 per cent majority was within reach. His deputy, John Taylor, was going for 55 per cent-plus.

One person who did not venture down the Shankill Road to be with loyalists was Mr Paisley, despite reports for two days that he was going to do so. "That's another no," chucked the Ulster Democra-

tic Party official Del Williams. "No, I don't want to go down the Shankill, because people there will tell me where to go."

As a soldier with the Royal Regiment of Wales, Mr Williams was shot by the IRA in

1971. After 20 operations, his leg was amputated last year. He said: "If I am prepared to sit down with Sinn Fein, why can't Mr Paisley? He has never fought for his country, although he

has made sure that a lot of other

people did by what he said. The fact is they talk about not wanting to talk to republicans when what they mean is they don't want to talk to Catholics."

In the nationalist area of Andersonstown Road, 23-year-

## Irish heed their 'appointment with history'

AMID fears of an embarrassingly low turnout in the Irish Republic's referendum on the Good Friday Agreement, Dublin ministers decided to give voters a telling off in advance, writes Alan Murdoch in Dublin.

Waving her schools'um's finger, the Taoiseach, or deputy premier, Mary Harney, had said before polling began, "right around the world

people will be mystified" if it was a poor showing. The Taoiseach Bertie Ahern had spoken of voters having "an appointment with history."

However, early reports confirmed a well above normal turnout for a referendum. "Yes" campaign managers suggested a 60 per cent-plus turnout was possible. The result in the Republic will not be available until early this evening.

old Davey Corrigan, whose stepbrother had served a prison sentence for arms offences, was going off to vote. He said: "I'm a republican and I don't want the Queen ruling us. But I'm certainly not going to shoot someone to make that point. I may have differences with Unionists, but we can discuss them, we can even beg to differ. The men with the guns are in the past. People are fed up with them."

At the corner of Tate's Avenue, in south Belfast, there is a new slogan on the wall showing this exasperation. It says simply: "Enough of this shit, let's have peace now, vote Yes."

CAMPAIGNERS for two Scots Guards jailed for murder in Northern Ireland have urged Secretary of State Mo Mowlam to consider freeing them early as a new climate of peace beckons. They spoke after the soldiers failed in their latest attempt to get their sentences cut.

Six years ago James Fisher, 29, from Ayr, and Mark Wright, 25, from Arbroath, were convicted of murdering Peter McBride, 18, in Belfast, shot after he ran from their patrol. Those campaigning for the soldiers' release say they acted under pressure.

Fisher's MP, George Foulkes, said he was not surprised the bid failed but believed there was still a chance of success soon. Mr Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, will meet Ms Mowlam next week to urge a review.

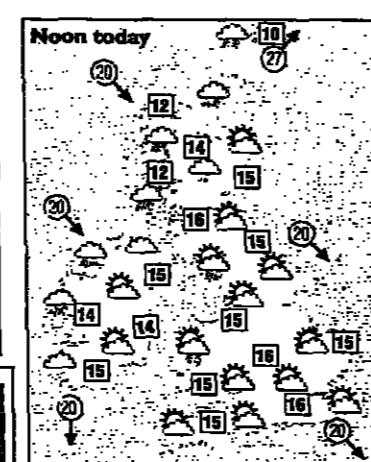
Yesterday Mr Justice Coghlin, in the High Court in Belfast, rejected the soldiers' application for a judicial review of the Northern Ireland Secretary's refusal to refer their case to the Life Sentence Review Board, as they had not made out a sufficient case of procedural impropriety or irrationality to quash the decision.

The pair – who are still in the Army – will have to wait until October for the board's next appraisal. The judge said Ms Mowlam had failed adequately to explain why the two soldiers were being treated as they were.

He granted a declaration that there had been a failure to provide proper and adequate reasons for the decision to distinguish the cases of Fisher and Wright from that of Private Ian Thain, who was convicted of murder and released after serving a shorter time in prison.

The judge said he would remit Fisher and Wright's cases to the Secretary of State "for further consideration in accordance with the declaration". The Secretary of State had decided that Fisher and Wright ought to serve a "significantly longer term of imprisonment" to reflect the culpability of their crime. Mr Justice Coghlin said.

## WEATHER



### British Isles weather

most recent available figures at noon local time

Clouds: Clear: Floc: Fr: Haze: Mist: Rain: Sleet: Showers: Snow: Thunder:

Aberdeen C 12.54 Baaresay C 15.59

Anglesey S 14.57 Inverness C 13.55

Ayr C 13.55 Ipswich F 14.57

Belfast C 14.57 Isle of Scilly C 15.59

Birmingham F 18.64 Jersey C 13.59

Blackpool F 15.59 Liverpool F 15.59

Bournemouth C 16.61 London C 15.59

Brighton C 16.61 Manchester C 16.61

Bristol C 17.63 Newcastle C 16.61

Cardiff F 15.59 Oxford F 15.59

Carlisle C 15.59 Plymouth C 14.57

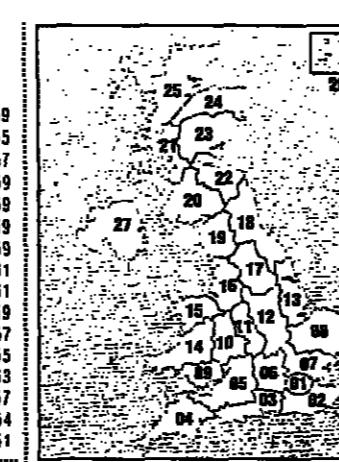
Caver F 14.57 Scarborough S 13.55

Durham F 17.63 Southampton C 17.63

Edinburgh C 17.63 Southend C 14.57

Exeter C 15.59 Starway Sh 12.54

Glasgow C 15.59 York C 16.61



### World weather

most recent available figures at noon local time

Clouds: Clear: Floc: Fr: Haze: Mist: Rain: Sleet: Showers: Snow: Thunder:

Auckland S 21.78 Chicago C 24.75

Amsterdam C 18.78 Copenhagen F 12.54

Antarctica C 18.53 Dublin C 12.54

Auckland C 24.75 Doha C 21.78

Antarctica C 18.53 Edinburgh C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 El Salvador C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Fukuoka C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Geneva C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Giza C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Hong Kong C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Istanbul C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Jeddah C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Jakarta C 22.72

Antarctica C 18.53 Jeddah C 22.72



Hillary Step, an hour's climb from the summit, where the writer was forced to abandon his attempt to climb Everest

3

## This week

He used to be a divine cleric.  
Now he's a holy terror."

SATURDAY REVIEW This evening, our weekly arts discussion includes a review of Andie O'Hanlon's dark new novel. Tom Stoppard also looks at the Liverpool Tatti, Glyndebourne and BBC's "The Human Body" Saturday evenings, 7.00-7.45.

"A dashing major.  
A married woman.  
An officer's mess."

THE CLASSIC SERIAL continues with "Eff Briest". Theodor Fontane's masterpiece of love and passion on the Baltic Coast with a conclusion as bitter as the climate. Sunday afternoons from 24 May, 3.00-4.00. Repeated Saturday evenings at 9.00.

"Broken hearts.  
Robbery. Murder.  
(And you were looking forward to a quiet bank holiday?)"

THE AFTERNOON PLAY "The Greengate Summer". Rumer Godden's coming-of-age tale set in France before World War II. Jess falls for the charming Eliot but he ends up stealing more than her heart. Bank holiday Monday afternoon, 2.15-3.45.

"Be merciless this Wednesday.  
Laugh at newsreaders' performances in bed."

THE WAY IT IS Our new bedtime comedy show takes a satirical look not just at the week's news, but also at how modern news is presented. Sport newscasters, Richard Richard and vain Lolly Swain, are your hosts for half an hour of fun. Wednesday nights, 11.00-11.30.

"Tropical jungles.  
Parched deserts.  
Mountains of dirty socks.  
(Welcome to the real world of our foreign correspondents)"

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT. In-depth slices of life from the BBC's 250 foreign correspondents around the world. Kate Adie introduces tales that mix the extraordinary with the everyday. Thursday mornings from 28 May, 11.02-11.30. And Saturday mornings, 11.30.

"Lisa L'Anson's lipstick stays on for 28 minutes"

LIPSTICK PLEASURES Tool of seduction. Call to arms. Key to the executive washroom. Oh, and you put it on every morning. Hear Lisa L'Anson on lipstick and why there's more to this little cosmetic than meets the eye. Friday morning, 29 May, 11.02-11.30.

"In some,  
love inspires poetry.  
In others, ratatouille."

VEG TALK Charlie Hicks and Greg Wallace get passionate about greens in a new series featuring chefs, recipes, growing tips and more than a little fun on the side. Friday afternoons from 29 May, 3.02-3.30.

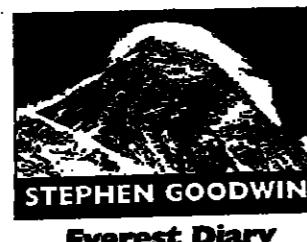
BBC RADIO 4

92-95 FM & 198 LW

YOU'LL SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY.



## We were 100m from the top of the world hanging on to what felt like a washing line. We had to turn back



NOT MUCH more than an hour's breathless climb from the summit of Everest, a well-judged "Let's get the hell outta here" from the American mountain guide Eric Simonson signalled the end of my attempt to reach the top of the world.

About 20 of us clustered on Everest's South Summit. At 8,760m, we were little more than 100m below the main summit of the Mother Goddess of the Universe, but separated by a narrow crest and that awkward rocky barrier, the Hillary Step. And we had no rope.

Momentarily, it was a relief. As the column of climbers was halted, I was able to push my oxygen mask hard against my face and stick in the cool "O's" until my chest stopped heaving.

Before that I'd been taking no more than five steps at a time, or maybe, only one if it involved a sharp pull up on the rope before having to rest.

The wind had become a part of me. Moisture trickled from the thinnest every gash. It had frozen to my beard and that, in turn, had frozen to my jacket. It became impossible to lift my head without a painful, icy tearing. Down had come up gloriously over the lands and of Tibet to the north and I'd barely been able to appreciate it, mired in the steaming column of would-be Everestians.

The sun brought another discomfort. With the mask clamped to the bridge of my nose, my prescription glacier glasses had to perch some distance from my eyes, allowing the glaring light in above and around the lenses. Only now, three days later in Base Camp, is the bruised pain behind my eyes subsiding, and one eyeball is still haemorrhaging. I should not complain. The day ended with several Sherpas and others being led down snow blind.

Camp 3 offers one of the best views in the world, directly over the Western Cwm and the peaks of the Khumbu. It is also one of the most costly, if you are sleeping on oxygen at \$350 a bottle a night. And it can be a

turned more lightly laden to complete the climb when the fixed ropes were in place.

The South Summit was the literal high point of an exhausting rollercoaster of a week for myself and at least some of our Himalayan Kingdoms Expeditions team. It started when the leader Dave Walsh, Rob Owen, a stockbroker, and myself left Base Camp for what we thought would be a single night to be a single night away, to inspect the damage to our Camp II in the Western Cwm wrought by the 100mph storm of 11 May.

At first sight the destruction

seemed so complete that we feared the show might be off.

Tents were flattened, poles bro-

ken and gear soaked, if not mis-

placed.

We slept the night sur-

rounded by salvage in a

domed tent battered to half its

size. Optimism rose as we re-

claimed the site over the next

couple of days. But then we

heard an extraordinary weather

forecast that a cyclone was on

its way from the Bay of Bengal

and would strike the Everest re-

gion on the night of 19-20 May,

dumping two metres of snow.

Something close to hysteria

broke out among the teams

gathered at Camp II. If the for-

cast was correct, the best thing

to do was to go for it. But was

it correct? There were 12 hours

of feverish radio exchanges,

disagreements and politicking,

the upshot of which in our case

was that last Sunday four of us—myself, Rob, the Canadian Byron Smith and the New Yorker David Callaway—were heading up the Lhotse Face to Camp 3, a six-hour grind in the baking sun up steep snow and ice.

Camp 3 offers one of the

best views in the world, directly

over the Western Cwm and the

peaks of the Khumbu. It is also

one of the most costly, if you are

sleeping on oxygen at \$350 a

bottle a night. And it can be a

fatal spot if you forget to clip into a safety line when stepping outside.

The route continued next day, higher up the face.

Four hours of communally ex- posed climbing later—looking down is a slide of maybe a kilo- metre—I arrived at the South Col, a pretty desolate spot. It would have been good to admire the views of Tibet and Nepal, but the priority was to get tents up in the biting cold, weighing them with rocks, then drinking as much fluid as possible before getting some rest.

Dave Walsh had joined us, but coming up from Camp II to the col in one go he had knocked himself out, and was coughing blood. Rob Owen

also decided he would not be

trying for the summit. He had

had signs of altitude sickness

earlier in the trip and decided

that health and happiness with

his new wife meant more to him

than a mountain he had paid

\$25,000 for a chance to climb.

We also heard that Pemba Tsering, one of the Sherpas with our

second party, had been hit by a

bursting block of ice on the

Lhotse Face and had a sus-

pected broken leg. A tricky

rescue operation was in

progress.

So it was just Byron Smith

and myself who set out with

Sherpas Nima Gyanu and Tser-

ing Dorjee, both former sum-

miteers, in a column of climbers

intent on utilising the weather

window. Setting out at 11pm in

the pitch dark from a campsite

at almost 8,000m, wearing an

oxygen mask and down cloth-

ing as bulky as a Michelin man,

is a disorienting experience. I

found myself stepping gingerly

up an ice bulge which daylight

would reveal to be relatively

easy-angled. Even so, there are

accidents here.

The steepening slope could

best be judged by the line of

head torches below us. My own

packed up—a faulty bulb—but

then there was partial moon-

light. Usually most of this 600m

slope is roped. In its absence five

people have fallen, including an

elderly American who is being

stretchered down the mountain

as I write.

Another casualty further up

the south-east ridge was Tom-

my Heinrich, a tough Argentinian with the Everest Challenge

expedition led by Tom Whittaker.

Heinrich, a previous Everest summiteer, tripped while descending and slid more

than 100m, puncturing his right

arm with his own ice axe and

sustaining multiple cuts and

bruises. Nevertheless, he was

able only hours later to help

Whittaker down from the

South Col when the Anglo-

American, who was planning to

become the first amputee to

climb Everest (he has only one

foot), developed signs of pul-

monary oedema, a potentially

fatal altitude sickness.

The falls and physical break-

downs came as no surprise. As

we ascended the steep ridge in

hand for that and for the return.

Disappointment was, how-

ever, tempered by the thought

that with 57 people on the

mountain in gathering wind,

the casualty list could have

been longer and bloodier had

the rope not run out.



Salman Rushdie,  
author:

'I had hoped  
they would be  
doing more  
for the arts  
by now'



Sir Peter Hall,  
theatre director:

'I've been told  
not to rock the  
boat. But they've  
got it wrong and  
a few of us have  
to say so'



Ken Loach,  
film director:

'Chris Smith's  
philistinism is  
sad ... He should  
be President of  
the Board of  
Trade'



Alan McGee,  
music magnate:

'If things don't  
improve, they  
won't be getting  
my money next  
time'

## Betrayed: the luvvies Labour's lost

By Jack O'Sullivan

IT seemed like an ideal setting for a summer celebration of Labour's relationship with the arts. The cool sophistication of the Tate Gallery, chilled wine and famous names on the guest list for the launch of Chris Smith's new book, *Creative Britain*. Who, on Wednesday night, could doubt the Government's commitment to the arts as the busy Culture Secretary spoke of wrestling till three in the morning with the first such work to be published by a Cabinet minister in 30 years?

Quite a few, it seemed. An event which a year ago would have been littered with so-called "Labour luvvies" lacked glitter. Sir Peter Hall, veteran director and staunch Labour supporter, had been blackballed for a stinging attack on Government policy earlier in the year. "These days, I'm *persona non grata*," says the former director of both the RSC and the National Theatre. Likewise, Ken Loach, film director and far-left critic, received no invitation. "It spared embarrassment all around," says Loach, with whom the Culture Secretary recently declined to debate on Channel Four. Meanwhile, many top names not yet struck off the list made their excuses. Melvyn Bragg, yet to feel any favours of Government patronage, failed to appear, as did Ben Elton, who has gone lukewarm on Cool Britannia.

Wayne Hemingway, founder of Red or Dead, the multi-million-pound fashion empire, was not tempted by his invitation. "It was beautifully designed. I thought at first it was an invitation to a trendy art show. A year ago I would have gone. But this year it wasn't my cup of tea. I preferred to spend the evening with my wife and kids really."

Among those who did turn up, some were willing to wait longer before passing judgement. "It's still early days," said the novelist Hanif Kureishi. "Chris Smith seems to be a serious person. He has written a book. I think we need to give him a little time." Others were less flattering. "I had hoped that they would be doing a bit more for the arts by now," said Salman Rushdie. "There are an awful lot of theatres out there which are in real trouble. The Government should be doing something for them," explained the author as a smiling Chris Smith bounded over and declared: "I don't think we've actually met."

Fortunately, for Chris Smith, the event was not marred by protest. But tempers are frayed.

So what has soured the love affair between the arts and the Labour party? The presentation to Chris Smith at the Tate of an eccentric piece of art by sculptor Bill Woodrow may have offered a hint. It featured a transparent turtle, filled with a hundred pennies, trying to stay afloat, while chained to a clump of books. It was meant to symbolise the nominal £1 Chris Smith received in royalties. But one wag said it marked the difficulty the arts have in staying afloat with minimal funds, because of the Government's freeze for two years af-



Chris Smith and Mathew Evans of Faber & Faber admire the transparent turtle at the Culture Secretary's book launch

Photograph: Jason Bell

ter the General Election on fresh spending commitments.

"People like me," says Sir Peter Hall, "have suffered 20 years of progressive starvation under the Conservatives. What we need now is some financial support. Chris Smith is an amiable and nice man, who makes the right noises, but he does not have any money."

"Tony Blair said before the election that there was going to be a new era for creativity. Creative people were going to be treated well and looked after. So far, there is no evidence of that whatsoever. They managed to find £750m for the Dome, yet the Greenwich Theatre closed for want

of £150,000. We are talking about a couple of hundred million pounds which could transform our futures and those of our children."

This week's resignation by the entire panel of drama advisors to the Arts Council also exemplifies Hall's concerns. They resigned saying that the business management style of Gerry Robinson, the new Arts Council chairman, has cut out artists. "In the States when I was on the Arts Council," says Hall, "we had people on it like Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland and CP Snow – genuine artists. But you can see now that the artists have made their final exit. One suspects that this Gov-

ernment, like the last one, is rather pleased when artists walk. It is evidence of drama and luvviedom. It's an excuse for using Thatcherite vocabulary that was meant to denigrate artists."

For Wayne Hemingway, the problems with the Government run deeper. He says, coming from a working-class background, that he would never have gone to university in the early Eighties, had there not been strong state funding. "You need £15,000 now, but that would have frightened me off. I was brought up in a pub and I'd have got a bar job and played safe, hoping maybe to be a bar manager one day. I'd never have taken the risk and started

Red or Dead, where I employ 100 people now."

"This chance to go to university for people like me has been vital. It has given us three years to be subversive and push back the boundaries. But a lot of people like me, with creative potential, will be frightened off by the cost." Meanwhile, Ken Loach condemns Chris Smith for his attitude to the film industry. "When he spoke at the London Film Festival, his benchmark for success was entirely financial. So *The Full Monty* and *Bean* were the ones he highlighted. But you would think that the Culture Secretary would have a broader sense of what makes a film

a success. It is about reflecting a society back on itself through images and stories. Chris Smith's type of philistinism is sad. He should be President of the Board of Trade if he wants to talk like this."

All this increasingly vocal opposition has got Labour worried. "I've had senior Labour peers telling me not to rock the boat," says Sir Peter Hall. "They say, 'you're not doing yourself any good'. But I don't mind. They have got it wrong and a few of us have to say so."

There are signs that the campaign is beginning to bear fruit, at least in the pop industry, which the Government is far more interested in appealing than other out of favour "elitist" arts. Labour grew concerned when Jarvis Cocker of Pulp and Ian Broudie of the Lightning Seeds ended their love affair with Labour. Worries grew when Alan McGee of Creation Records described Tony Blair as "all surface". McGee became one of the chief critics of the Government's welfare to work policy on the grounds that it would kill off fledgling bands. He declared: "Of course, the likes of me and Noel (Gallagher) are there to be used, especially before the election. But you hope for a little bit more beyond the surface. If things don't improve they won't be getting my money next time."

This week it emerged that Alan McGee had hammered out a deal which will allow some 16-24 year olds, aspiring to pop stardom, to go on a college music course or work placement in the industry. When I tried to contact him, his spokesman said: "Alan's attitude is that he would rather talk to the Government than the media."

This attitude is gaining support among those worried that too much haranguing from the wings will alienate this Government just as it did the last. Stephen Daldry, director of the Royal Court Theatre, says: "It is most important to point out, when people say Labour has betrayed its election promises, that it's not true. People misconstrue Labour's support for the arts as central to the regeneration of the country. There was no financial commitment. The arts establishment is living in a fairytale if it ever thought that the Government was going to turn up with a magic wand and make everything better."

But David Puttnam, emboldened by Tony Blair, is the strongest voice calling for an end to the sniping. Currently pitching to be deputy director-general of the BBC, Puttnam is as close the arts community gets to having someone in the Prime Minister's office. He says that the arts establishment has failed to understand the manifesto properly. "It was quite clear that there would be a moratorium on new spending for two years. What we should be doing now is working out coherent and effective ways of spending money, when eventually becomes available. I think a lot of my colleagues are making a big mistake. People see that we cannot even agree among ourselves. It's a problem that bedevilled us for 18 years. If I was the Government, I would throw up my hands and say, 'Sod them.' It looks like the drama is only beginning."

## Nice suits, but are Blair's babes doing the business?

By Anthony Bevins  
Political Editor

AN attack on the "gender apartheid" and "genitalia politics" of Labour's women-only shortlists yesterday provoked strong reaction from the ranks of the party's 101 women MPs.

Writing in the latest edition of *Tribune*, the Labour weekly, Ann Carlton said: "They are at it again – the whinger wing of Labour feminism, as confused as ever and wanting favours.

"Once, Labour men were so horribly

sexist (allegedly) and Labour women so pathetically shortlisted could the poor dears become MPs. Now with nearly half the Labour Party's members women, there are different demands. Now it is "constituency twinning" for the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, with the often reluctant twin constituencies required to choose one man and one woman."

She claimed that voters and the vast majority of Labour Party members believed that ability, dedication and experience should determine a person's suitability to be a candidate – implying that

was the basis on which male MPs were selected, and that women should be given no additional support. But Ms Carlton added the more damaging charge that the additional injection of women MPs at the last election – 121 out of 659 Members – had not made a blind bit of difference to the political scene.

"Before the last election," she said, "we were told that parliamentary selections based on genitalia politics would mean a transformation of the House of Commons.

"Thanks to women-only shortlists, the Labour benches would be awash with

brightly coloured women's suits, and those women MPs would stand up for women's issues in a way that male MPs had not done. We have seen the suits – very nice and quite expensive. The politics are no different."

She said that there had been no great rush of women to support lone parents or defend the disabled from Government attack, while several women MPs appeared to enjoy a good moan about the lack of creche facilities, or the burden and hours of parliamentary work.

But Ann Clwyd, the veteran Welsh MP, yesterday deplored the attack, pointing out

that before she entered the House in 1984, there had been no Welsh women MPs for 34 years, and she was the only one right through to last year's General Election.

"They say we should get into the Commons on merit – like the men. If that were true, there would be dozens more women MPs," Ms Clwyd said.

Jane Griffiths, new Labour MP for Reading East, was also selected without an all-women shortlist. She said: "Why should it be assumed that women are going to make a particular kind of impact, as women? Some individuals will make a

great impact, others will make less. She is just making false assumptions."

Caroline Flint, who was selected as Labour candidate for Don Valley without the benefit of all-women shortlist, said Ms Carlton was not living in the real world and challenged the notion that the women had made no difference.

"Where's Ann Carlton been?" she asked. "A national childcare strategy, minimum wage legislation, one million after-school places, childcare tax credits, employment rights for part-time workers. The impact of women on Labour policy is staring us in the face."



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# Nurses fall out over account of confessions

By Andrew Buncombe

GROWING evidence emerged yesterday of the breakdown in the relationship between Deborah Parry and Lucille McLaughlin.

In Saudi Arabia, the two nurses had been close; they spent 17 months in a cell together. But by the time they arrived back in Britain they barely had a word for each other. "I just said goodbye and she said 'See you again sometime' – though I doubt I ever will," Ms Parry told the *Express*.

At the heart of this breakdown is the way in which Ms McLaughlin, 32, was said to have encouraged Ms Parry, 39, to confess to the savage killing of their colleague, Yvonne Gifford. Both have told their stories to the *Mirror* and the *Express* respectively. Both have different stories to tell.

Ms McLaughlin insists that she only signed a confession because she feared she was about to be raped. She says she encouraged her friend to confess because she had been told they would both be released if she did. But it is the manner in which she encouraged her to confess that appears to have upset Ms Parry's supporters.

"Debs told us that what happened was that Lucille was offered her freedom if she named Debbie as the killer so the whole case could be put to rest," Ms Parry's brother-in-law, Johnathan Ashbee, said last year. "And the police told Debs that if she confessed, as she and the victims were both Westerners, it would be all over in a couple of weeks and she could go free."

Ms Parry's sister, Sandra, also told the *Daily Mail*: "Lucille has a lot to answer for. But for her, I don't think my sister would ever have been in prison."

In her interview with the *Express*, Ms Parry said she had been held for several days, with her captors interrogating her for up to 12 hours a day, repeatedly telling her that she was guilty. She said that Ms McLaughlin

then entered her cell with the police. "I did not know Lucille was there until she walked in and said, 'Debbie stabbed Yvonne in the chest, neck and back,' she had written in her diary. After this I was slapped across the face, my hair was pulled and my feet stood on. I was shocked, distraught."

In her account of what happened, Ms McLaughlin admitted she had been forced to accuse her friend. "I just parroted it. Repeated what I had been told to say like a puppet because what else could I do," she said.

Ms Parry's friends have also said that had it not been for Ms McLaughlin, Deborah may not have ever been arrested. She had been persuaded to go shopping with Ms McLaughlin when she was arrested on suspicion of stealing Ms Gifford's bank card. Ms Parry was arrested at the same time.

Despite what they may have been told, the full confessions of the two nurses did not lead to their immediate release. Instead, Ms Parry was sentenced to death while Ms McLaughlin was sentenced to eight years imprisonment and 500 lashes.

Although both women claimed they had been tortured into their confession by the threat of sexual abuse, the Saudi authorities last night dismissed the allegations as "laughable".

The Saudi ambassador in London, Ghazi Algosabi, said his country did not regret the decision to send the two nurses home, but rejected claims that they were innocent. "If you go around any prison in the world and ask inmates whether they committed the crime of which they are convicted, I suspect the vast majority of them will deny the charges. I think human nature works that way," he said.

"I think anyone with even the slightest knowledge of Saudi society, its deeply religious and conservative nature, will realise that any allegations of sexual abuse are laughable. Saudi Arabia is convinced that its judicial system is capable of delivering justice."



With evidence growing of a breakdown in their relationship, Deborah Parry (left) and Lucille McLaughlin (right) are now facing an inquiry by the nurses' governing body

## Nursing body to investigate complaint by MP

THE two nurses are to be investigated by the governing body for nurses in Britain. The United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing said it was investigating a complaint made by the Labour MP George Galloway, that the nurses should not be allowed to work again, writes Andrew Buncombe.

The UKCCN has the power to strike off its register any nurses convicted of serious offences in Britain. If a nurse is not on the reg-

ister, he or she cannot legally work. Lucille McLaughlin, 32, has been summoned to appear at Dundee Sheriff Court next month charged with stealing £1,740 from a dying patient.

The council indicated last night that if convicted she will almost certainly be struck off.

Mr Galloway, the MP for Glasgow Kelvin, said his complaint against the nurses was in the public interest. "If I didn't believe that this was an unsavoury matter before

the signing of the tabloid deals and coverage, I certainly do now."

"The UKCC, which is responsible for nurses, needs to investigate the matter forthwith. If it had been a British conviction they would have done so automatically. I want them struck off. I don't want to see them practice," he said.

John Knape, a spokesman for the UKCCN, said the council was currently taking legal advice on how far it should pursue its inquiries.

"There has been an allegation made against them but it would be very difficult to gather the evidence that we would require," he said. "I cannot see us going to Saudi Arabia as part of our investigation."

In normal circumstances, the UKCC employs barristers and solicitors to investigate any conviction from abroad.

This would include taking evidence from witnesses, and interviewing the nurse concerned, as

well as colleagues and the employer. The UKCC, with which 625,000 nurses are registered, receives approximately 1,000 complaints a year, 200 of which come automatically from the British courts.

Of these, about 100 lead to nurses, midwives or health visitors being struck off. Up to 80 per cent of the cases which go before its Professional Conduct Committee – many are thrown out at the initial screening stage – are proven.



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Following a bitter battle, eight families have won the right to claim compensation for the death of relatives after a medical warning was ignored

## Triumph as victims of CJD error win cash fight

By Ian Burrell  
Home Affairs Correspondent

EIGHT families who lost relatives to CJD following treatment with human growth hormone yesterday won the right to claim compensation from the Government.

The High Court ruling signalled a triumphant end to a nine-year battle for the families who have submitted compensation claims totalling more than £1m. The finding is likely to pave the way for many more claims.

Between 1959 and 1985 nearly 2,000 British children whose growth was stunted because of a deficiency in the secretion of growth hormone in their pituitary glands were treated with hormone from the pituitaries of human cadavers.

Two years ago, the Department of Health was found negligent in not heeding the warning of Dr Alan Dickinson, who in 1977 told the Medical Research Council about the risk of contracting CJD from the hormone treatment. The ruling cleared the way for families of victims treated after 1 July 1977 to seek compensation. Yesterday Mr Justice Morland ruled that families of victims whose treatment "straddled" the compensation cut off date could also seek compensation.

After the ruling, Stephen Irwin QC, representing the families of 13 victims, said that the Department of Health would "no doubt" consider admitting liability swiftly "so as to relieve the minds of the families". Five of the families he represents have yet to have their cases determined.

Among the successful families yesterday was that of Saul Hefferson-Walden, who died of CJD at the age of 20 in 1988.

Saul, who was treated with growth hormone between the ages of seven and 17, first became sick while studying for his A-levels. His father, Don Hefferson, said: "It was a terrible

feron, of Paddington, west London, said the family put his condition down to "the average young man's lifestyle of late nights, discos and drinking cider in the union bar".

Mr Hefferson said his son had been offered a place at the Anglia Polytechnic but found his concentration and writing becoming difficult.

"I feel more distressed than angry or bitter. I had always presumed the NHS was there to relieve care for people ... in extreme distress, whatever their particular illness," he said. "I am very happy there has been this decision, but I am sad that not all people have been included in it."

Terence Newman, another CJD victim, died in December 1990 at the age of 21 following treatment with human growth hormone between the ages of six and 18. His mother Maureen Newman, 48, from Coulsdon, Surrey, said: "I am very pleased with the judgment, I just wish it had all finished a couple of years ago for us. Now we know we have won we can let Terry rest."

She stressed that, without legal aid, she could never have fought the case.

David Body, of Irwin Mitchell solicitors, representing the plaintiffs, said: "After the Department of Health was found negligent in 1996, our suggestion that all remaining cases be compensated was fought at every step ... These families were fighting a government that refused a public inquiry and so had to seek their justice at court."

Leigh-Ann Minchahy, counsel for the Department of Health, said: "My clients wish to have an opportunity to consider the judgment and consider whether or not they wish to appeal it in any way."

In a later judgment, expected in July, Mr Justice Morland will rule in test cases brought by six people who received the growth treatment and who live in fear of contracting CJD.

## Mystery over metal strips found in body

A TEENAGE holidaymaker who died in Corfu had what were probably metal strips inside her body at least two years ago, it was disclosed yesterday.

Nineteen-year-old Karen Murray collapsed on the Greek island last week complaining of stomach pains. Doctors there claimed equipment and swabs from a previous operation were found in her body.

Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool, where Ms Murray had major bowel surgery eight years ago, said yesterday that her medical records showed that all the swabs used in the operation were removed, counted and checked.

But the mystery over the death of Ms Murray, from Birkenhead, Merseyside, deepened when the hospital disclosed that X-rays taken at another hospital six years later had shown the presence of the strips.

"The X-rays taken in 1996 ... show what appear to be five ... probably metal strips which do not correlate to any surgical equipment or item used in the 1990 surgery," said solicitors for Alder Hey in a statement.

Doctors in Corfu said that a post-mortem examination had found surgical gauze and a number of plastic medical clips in her abdomen. The medical evidence was not returned with her body to Britain earlier this week, the Foreign Office confirmed yesterday. The swabs and

other items remained in Corfu despite requests that they should be sent to Britain.

A second post-mortem examination carried out by Dr Edmund Tapp, a Home Office pathologist, failed to establish the cause of death.

A Foreign Office spokesman said: "We are assisting with the examining officer's request for the necessary material to be sent to the UK."

Alder Hey Hospital, which operated on Ms Murray when she was 12 years old, said it had reviewed her medical records after concerns from lawyers acting for her family.

"Those records establish that on 6 December 1990, Karen underwent major bowel surgery. During that procedure a number of swabs were used.

"The medical records show that all the swabs were removed and counted and checked before the surgery was finished. The operation was a complete success," said the hospital's solicitors.

They said that the X-rays taken later at Southport and Formby District and General Hospital had shown no evidence of any swab in Ms Murray's abdomen. All surgical swabs had threads that were designed to show up on X-ray film, the hospital said.

The Southport coroner yesterday opened and adjourned an inquest into Ms Murray's death.



Maureen Newman, 48, whose son Terence died of CJD at the age of 21 in 1990; he had had 12 years of treatment with the human growth hormone

Photograph: David Rose

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## Cash crisis may force Britain's oldest children's theatre to close

By David Lister  
Arts News Editor

THE OLDEST and best-known children's theatre in Britain is on the brink of collapse.

The 50-year-old Unicorn Theatre for Children is in financial crisis and will close unless it can raise £200,000 from a public appeal.

Ironically, news of the crisis breaks two days after the launch of a book, *Creative Britain*, by Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith, in which he states that education and access are two of the cornerstones of Britain's arts policy.

The Unicorn is famous for both its educational work and for encouraging thousands of children to go to the theatre for the first time.

It is one of only two children's theatres in Britain. The other is the Polka Theatre, in south London.

Critically acclaimed, and attracting 50,000 children over the last year, the plight of the Unicorn has nothing to do with its record as a children's theatre.

Based in the Arts Theatre Building in the West End of London, it is dependent on rental from other productions in the evening to supplement its own income. While the Unicorn's daytime shows have done well, the evening productions, which it also programmes, have fared badly over the last year, losing an extra £50,000.

The Unicorn has long wanted to have a purpose-built theatre of its own and is preparing a Lottery

application. But at present it has a deficit of £340,000. The theatre receives a grant of £20,000 from the London Arts Board.

Performers who featured at the Unicorn early in their careers include Sylvester McCoy, Maureen Lipman, Amanda Barrie and Jenny Seagrove. Unicorn writers have included Shirley Hughes and Adrian Mitchell.

Tony Graham, the artistic director, said yesterday the theatre would have to close if the £200,000 was not raised.

He added that he had plans for it to become a unique cultural centre for children, showcasing international work, doing research into children's theatre and continuing with its successful storytelling festival of this year, as well as maintaining its reputation for children's shows.

He said: "The closure of the Unicorn would be a disastrous loss for London's children. It would seem to be deeply ironic when we are repeatedly told that our national cultural priorities hinge on children, education and access.

Over two and a half million children have visited the Unicorn since we began; many well-known actors made their first appearance here; the Unicorn occupies a very special place in people's hearts. Everyone just finds it inconceivable that we should go down."

Those wishing to contribute to the Save The Unicorn fund should telephone 0171-836 3334.



The Lost Child by Mike Kenny, being performed at the Unicorn Theatre for Children, in the West End of London, which may have to close because of a cash crisis

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## British lead the way in hi-fi revolution

By Charles Arthur  
Science and Technology Editor

You can hang them on your wall, paint them, wallpaper over them, make them as small as a credit card or as big as a ceiling tile, mount them on aeroplanes or in cars. What else but flat loudspeakers – unveiled yesterday by a British company which aims to revolutionise home hi-fi from this summer. The technology used

to make the revolutionary speakers, which are less than two centimetres thick, emerged in 1993 from a British military project to soundproof helicopter gearboxes.

What the team discovered was that flat speakers which would give authentic audio reproduction were feasible. You simply had to solve a fourth-order differential equation including eight or so variables, including the size and materi-

al properties of the speaker. "The principle is like a piano soundboard," explained Stan Curtis, chairman of the loudspeaker company Wharfedale yesterday. "A long piano string doesn't make much noise. But the soundboard resonates, so you can hear one piano throughout the Albert Hall. Conventional loudspeakers are like violins – you need more of them to make more noise."

The flat Wharfedale NXT

speakers will cost about £200 from retailers like Dixons and Currys. They will not suit the top-end audiophile – for whom the joys of positioning speakers and producing a room where an imaginary orchestra's members can be pinpointed are essential. But *The Independent's* (fairly unscientific) listening test suggested that the new speakers could quickly replace the wooden boxes that have cluttered living room floors and bookcases

ever since hi-fi meant having more than a Dausette and a stack of records skewed above it. "True, it won't satisfy every hi-fi buff," said Mr Curtis. "But this is only the first generation. These are aimed at the average enthusiast. It doesn't give you that pin-point sound, but it offers a great 'surround' sound, which is especially good for home cinema."

Other obvious applications

include announcement systems and loudspeakers for computers – both of which Wharfedale is already demonstrating.

The first prototypes, produced with the Defence Research Agency (DERA) in Farnborough, used materials such as carbon fibre and aircraft-quality aluminium which meant they cost about £800 each. But on discovering the soundboard principle, the team cut the costs so that parts for the new speakers cost just £5 each.

Wharfedale has licensed the technology to NXT; the company set up to develop the DERA discovery. Essentially, each speaker consists of a transducer which excites resonance in the air cells of a honeycomb matrix between the panels.

Mr Curtis said: "People are always criticising us in Britain for having great ideas but not getting them into production. Well, here's one which we have."

## Women's £50,000 victory in RSI case

By Barrie Clement  
Labour Editor

TENS of thousands of computer users throughout industry suffering from a particularly painful form of Repetitive Strain Injury stand to gain from a landmark judgment yesterday.

For the first time, the existence of "diffuse" RSI was recognised after a full legal hearing, contradicting a High Court ruling in 1993 which effectively declared that it was "all in the mind".

At the Mayor's and City of London Court, five former Midland bank workers, who suffered "considerable pain" in their arms, necks and shoulders, were awarded £50,000 in compensation. Judge Byrt said in his judgment that the bank had been in breach of its duty of care to its employees. While yesterday's ruling was at county court level and does not constitute a precedent, other hearings will find it difficult to ignore.

During the six-week case, which ended earlier this year, the five women said they had suffered a series of upper-limb disorders after they were ordered to increase their work rate. Judge Byrt said the employees who were based at the Midland's processing centre at Frimley, Surrey, had been suffering from a combination of pressure of work and insufficient breaks from keyboards. The judge awarded them £7,000 each in general compensation and special compensation for loss of earnings. The Banking, Insurance and Finance Union, which backed the women's case, said the bank faced costs of £500,000.

A spokesman for the bank said that management was disappointed with the decision and was considering an appeal.

## Fibre optics help in cancer

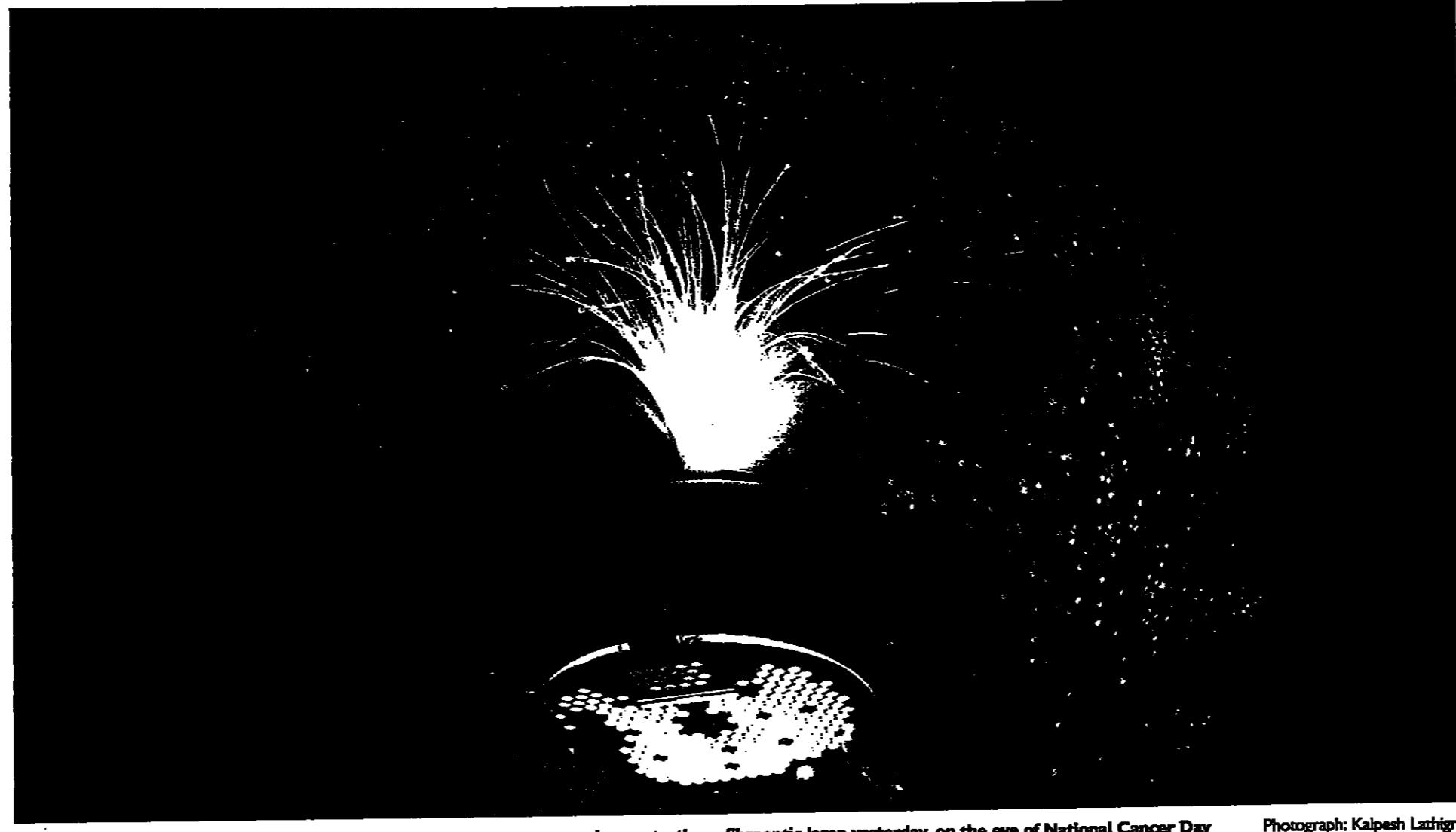
By Jeremy Laurance  
Health Editor

A PROBE that can measure the exact amount of oxygen in a tumour helping to target treatment where it is needed is to be tested to see if it can improve the outcome in a range of cancers.

The fiberoptic probe, similar to a single strand of a fibre optic light, lights up when inserted into tissue containing oxygen. Oxygen levels are critical because they affect the way that cancer responds to chemotherapy and radiotherapy – the lower the level of oxygen the harder the tumour is to destroy.

Early research on the device, developed at the Cancer Research Campaign's Gray Laboratories in Northwood, Middlesex, shows that it is better than existing methods of assessing oxygen levels.

Dr Borivoj Vojnovic, the probe's inventor, said: "By knowing a tumour's oxygen levels, doctors can tailor chemotherapy and radiotherapy to individuals making their



Dr Vojnovic, inventor of the probe he believes will aid cancer treatment, demonstrating a fiberoptic lamp yesterday, on the eve of National Cancer Day

Photograph: Kalpesh Lathigra

treatment more effective. I am also convinced that there are countless other applications for the device, many of which we haven't yet thought of."

Scientists believe that the device, called the Oxylite system, has potential applications in

plastic surgery, the care of head injuries, shock monitoring and cardiology.

Professor Gordon McVie, director of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "If the patient trials for the device are successful, I would hope that one

day a type of oxygen sensor will be routinely used in cancer treatment. By being able to customise treatment to individual patients it would mean more effective treatment for cancer patients and in some cases less side-effects."

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# Thatcher hired by controversial investment fund

By Les Paterson

BARONESS Thatcher has been hired as an adviser to one of the world's largest investment firms, a hedge fund famed for its aggressive and confrontational business approach.

Ironically, it was hedge funds, companies which speculate in currency and share movements, which forced sterling out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) in 1992.

Tiger Management yesterday said it was "an honour" to have the former prime minister

paid men on Wall Street, said: "The advisory board plays a vital part at Tiger and we are honoured to have Lady Thatcher as a member".

A spokesperson for the company said Lady Thatcher would be advising on "financial, political and economic issues".

He said the former Tory leader was "one of the most respected individuals on the globe".

A spokesperson for Lady Thatcher said: "She has known the company for some years and, more recently, was asked whether she would join the advisory board".

The spokesperson added that the board generally met between four and six times a year, and Lady Thatcher expected to attend her first meeting in July.

Tiger Management, with around \$18bn (£10.8bn) of total assets, is the world's second largest hedge fund. The largest hedge fund in the world is Soros Fund Management, headed by the controversial George Soros.

George Soros achieved notoriety back in 1992 when it emerged that he had earned more than \$1bn from betting that the pound would fall out of the ERM. More recently, Mr Soros hit the headlines again when it was rumoured that he had bet \$8bn that the pound would fall against the Deutschmark.

A spokesperson for Tiger Management declined to discuss whether his company was actively involved in forcing the pound from the ERM. The spokesperson added that Tiger primarily invested in company shares, although it did occasionally invest in commodities and currencies.

This is not the first controversial career move Baroness Thatcher has made since resigning as Prime Minister. Philip Morris, the US tobacco giant whose cigarette brands include Marlboro, has hired the

Lady Thatcher: Possible six-figure deal

ter on its staff. Lady Thatcher is to sit on Tiger Management's advisory board, which counts Bob Dole, the former US senator, among its 10 members.

A spokesman for Lady Thatcher declined to say how much she would be paid for her services. However, sources said it was not uncommon for high-profile figures to receive six-figure sums in these circumstances.

Julian Robertson, founder and director of New York-based Tiger Management, and rumoured to be one of the best

## Fly-on-wall didn't show full picture

By Janine Gibson  
Media Correspondent

THE BBC is again facing potentially embarrassing revelations about one of its "fly-on-the-wall" documentary-soap hits.

*Clampers*, which has garnered around 7.5 million viewers with its tales of the day-to-day life of a bellicose car clamer in south London, was revealed yesterday to have, at best, stretched reality.

A Southwark Council spokesman admitted that the show's star, Ray Brown, is an office-bound duty manager who is very seldom seen out clamping.

Mr Brown was shadowed for eight months by the BBC crew on the streets of south London. The impression given in the programme was that Mr Brown's stunts, such as singing the Queen's "Another One Bites the Dust" while clamping a car, are everyday incidents.

But yesterday it emerged that after interviewing staff at the Airport Parking Corporation of America, which is sub-contracted by Southwark Council to manage car clamping, the BBC researchers felt Mr Brown was the most television-friendly, despite his being supervisor rather than a clamer.

Mr Brown, himself, undermined the programme-makers when he told a press agency: "I haven't worked on the streets for the last two years," though yesterday he claimed in a BBC statement that those comments had been misinterpreted.

He is currently on leave from Southwark Council, avoiding the media glare, but a colleague said yesterday: "Ray is a bit of a mercurial character... His job has always involved some going out and clamping vehicles but he is largely office-

based. Though that doesn't make for very interesting television, I suppose."

The BBC issued a statement, saying: "The series was made with the full co-operation and support of Southwark Council, which has expressed its satisfaction with the portrayal of its work in the series as accurate and fair... Throughout the six-part series [Mr Brown] is seen performing a variety of duties both on the street and office-based."

Broadcasters and producers have been accused recently of blurring the line between fact and fiction in the fly-on-the-wall genre. The new breed of light entertainment-style documentary soap, while gathering huge numbers of viewers, has been all-but disowned by more serious documentary-makers.

The BBC was forced to admit that its breakthrough hit *Driving School* contained reconstructed footage, while Channel 4 apologised to viewers when it suffered the same problem with *Rogue Males*. Last week the BBC confirmed it was examining the guidelines it issued to producers to see if there were lessons to be learned.

*Clampers* was not produced by the same team as *Driving School*, which came from BBC Bristol. *Clampers* producer, Kim Duke, was adamant that her series was fair: "We don't want to misrepresent anything... We do extensive research before we start doing anything."

Through the build-up to the transmission of *Clampers*, Mr Brown himself has become something of a media celebrity, joining *Driving School*'s heroine Maureen Rees, who has also had rather more than her allotted 15 minutes of fame. Mr Brown is currently filming a new BBC game show called *A Date with Fate*.



Visitors browsing among the bookshops in Hay-on-Wye, Powys, yesterday, at the start of the town's annual literary festival

Photograph: Rob Siverton

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# Second-hand gets classy as rich join poor in search of a designer label bargain

By Glenda Cooper  
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

JARVIS Cocker does it. So do Paul McCartney and Brian May. According to a new survey, Britain spends £5bn a year at charity shops, second-hand shops and car-boot sales.

Most of us will be out bargain hunting this weekend, when there will be an estimated 10,000 car-boot sales. A survey of 1,000 people commissioned by the second-hand retail chain Cash Converters found that bargain seekers made almost 145 million visits to car-boot sales last year - three visits per person spending on average £8.32 a time.

The idea of shopping for second-hand goods being confined to those less well off is a myth. While lower social groups visit car-boot sales three times as often as ABC1s, the survey also revealed that professional and managerial types are more likely to buy second-hand than they are to buy the *Financial Times*: more than half a million of them go to boot sales two to three times a year or more and spend £12.05 on average.

The single biggest attraction of these "alternative retail outlets" is the chance to pick up a bargain, with just under half citing this as the reason. Thrifty British shoppers were also at-

tracted by low prices (24 per cent) and value for money (18 per cent).

At the Oxfam shop in Marylebone, west London, yesterday, Angelica Letsch, who works for an independent record company, was trying on a lined kimono for £39.99. She said: "It's the low prices, it's the adventure. You never know what's going to be there and that's a great feeling. I've just got two beautiful wrought-iron candleholders for £2.99 and you can imagine what that would cost in Selfridges or Harrods. I think it's a really nice way of shopping."

June Doswell's greatest bargain was a silk dress that she had seen in Simpsons for £300 but picked up in a charity shop for £5. "I'm a clothesaholic but you have to have a budget. So what I'll do is buy a really good jacket and then come here to buy trousers to match or vice versa. I think it's a real English thing to get something for nothing."

Peter Holbrook, the manager of the branch, said that the image of charity shops being musty and full of tat was outdated. "We get people popping into the Conran shop and then coming into us. We have a lot of very well-heeled customers."

The Marylebone shop has a large record collection and Mr Holbrook said that many disc jockeys came into



Angelica Letsch trying on a kimono in the Marylebone Road Oxfam shop - £39.99 and very stylish

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

to look for unusual records as well as pop stars such as Jarvis Cocker, Sir Paul McCartney and Brian May. "We've sold first-edition Rolling Stones albums and first-edition *Sgt Pepper's* for £150 - £200. We also have a lot of books and sold a first edition *Catcher in the Rye* [the novel by JD Salinger]."

Michael Kew was delighted to find a recording of the Brandenburg Concertos by Otto Klemperer. "I come here because they have the best record selection that I know of. There's a very wide choice."

Ten minutes away, the Oxfam

branch in Edgware Road is a more conventional type of charity shop. Rosemary Hittinger was browsing: "I come here to buy my books because books are so expensive now," she said. "I think we're a nation of bargain hunters. I don't think it's altruism at all."

Angela Calavia was less convinced: "I don't usually come into charity shops because of the smell," she said. "They smell of that musty smell or death, although this one doesn't. I always worry, I don't like wearing someone else's clothes."

Christine Carus-Wilson, dis-

cerned about the quality of goods purchased and the lack of a guarantee or after-sales protection.

"Many people are unaware of the lack of protection attached to buying goods from a car-boot sale," said Alan Street, chief executive of the Institute of Trading Standards. "Buying from a private individual very much reduces the consumer's rights in law ... we all

love a bargain but we would advise the public that if they want to protect their rights they should stick to reputable second-hand retailers who can guarantee their consumer rights, who should also abide by the law."

## Half of Wendy houses unsafe

By Louise Jury

NEARLY half of children's Wendy houses examined by trading standards officers were unsafe, it was revealed yesterday.

Surrey trading standards said only 54 out of 96 playhouses examined were completely safe. Officers in areas including Hertfordshire and Worcestershire found similar problems.

One manufacturer has already been successfully prosecuted in the wake of the investigation, launched in response to complaints from parents.

An investigation by Surrey trading standards officials found many playhouses contained splinters, sharp points, protruding nails, staples and screws.

Many had door and window frames where small fingers could be caught and injured while some doors could not be opened from the inside. Some used glass in windows, carrying the risk of breakage and injury. Two were built on two levels and had gaps in the balustrade through which a child could fall or where a child could become trapped.

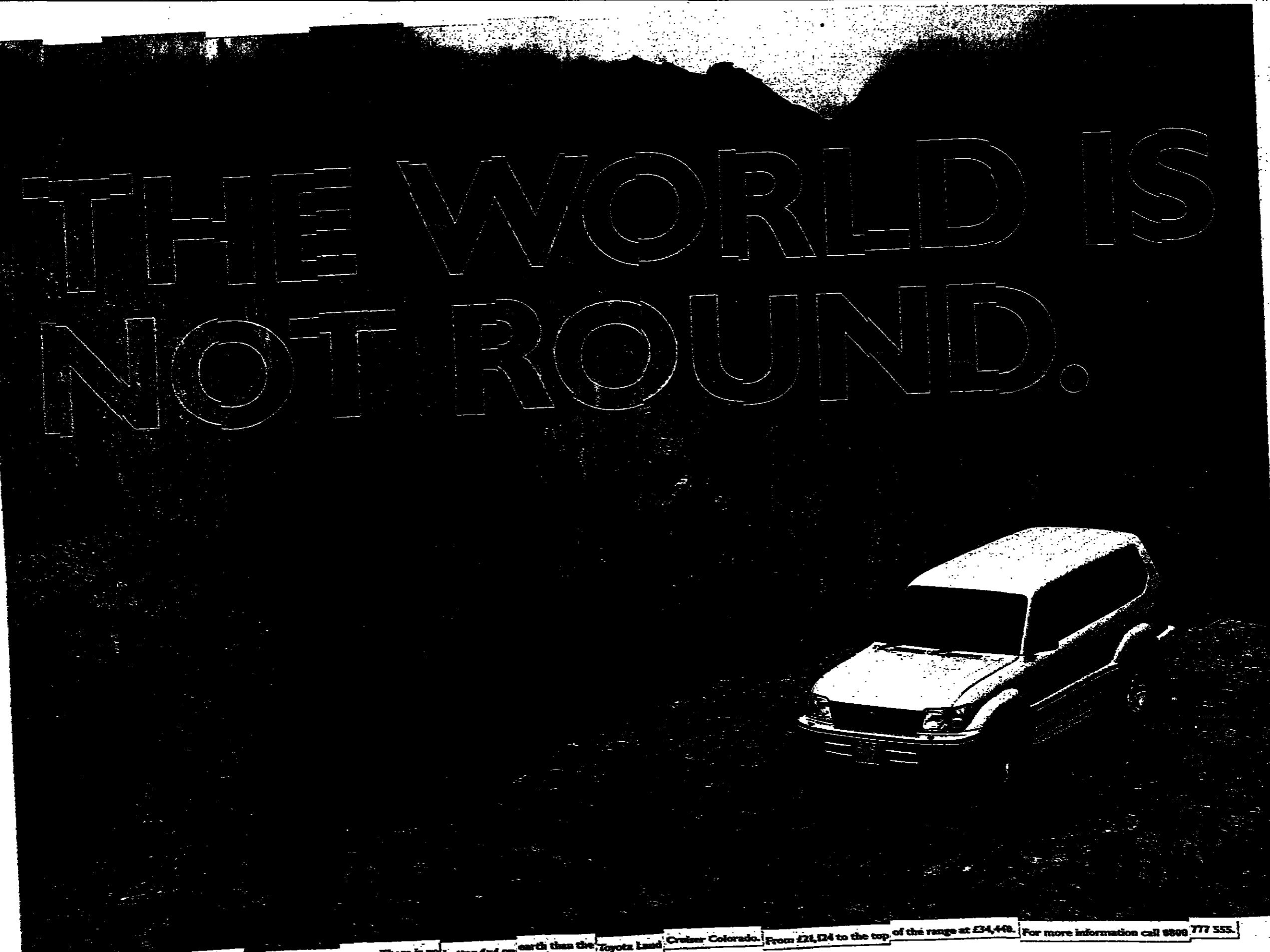
Jon Garden Buildings Ltd, of West Yorkshire, was ordered to pay £1,000 costs and conditionally discharged for two years for failing to meet the necessary safety standards.

Peter Denard, Surrey's trading standards officer, said: "If you're unsure of how to erect a playhouse, always seek the advice of a professional."

Phil Dart, head of policy for Surrey trading standards, said the problem appeared to be that many Wendy houses were made by garden shed manufacturers who did not know that they were classified as a toy. "With the kind of controls we now have with toy safety, it is very rare to find something that is wrong with something made in Britain."

Leading article, page 20

THE WORLD IS  
NOT ROUND.



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# A lost boy in America's killing fields

By Tim Cormwell  
in Springfield, Oregon

"TO ALL MEDIA," read a cardboard sign on the fence at Thurston High School, amid endless bouquets of flowers thrust in the wire. "We need to put the blame in its right spot — not all on Kip Kinkel was an average middle-class boy and because he got angry you showed him how to become famous in 15 minutes. Your fault, not one else's!"

Nearby Amanda Nilsen, 17, talked passionately through her braces. "I think that the boy lost hope," she said. "I think he felt he had nothing to live for. People lose hope, they feel lost, they act in odd ways. We're teenagers, nobody ever listens to us. As soon as they start listening, this will stop."

Kipland P Kinkel, 15, was to appear in court charged with murder yesterday in the killing of two schoolmates and the wounding of nearly two dozen others in a bloody early morning rampage in his school cafeteria.

Mikael Nicolson, 17, engaged to be married, died at the scene; the death of a second teenager, initially on life support was confirmed yesterday.

Prosecutors said they would seek to try Kinkel as an adult, though Oregon does not have the death penalty. Kinkel was also presumed to have shot dead his parents, William and Faith Kinkel, both teachers in their late 50s found dead at the family home. The only family survivor was his older sister, Christina, a former Thurston cheerleader studying at a college in Hawaii.

A small and eminently solid American city groped for an explanation yesterday to the latest spree shooting by a US schoolboy, and could not find one. The answer that sprang to mind — gun control — was hard to reconcile in a place where most families have guns at home, and schools traditionally close for a day when the deer season opens.

"You look at our kids, and you know they've got deer rifles, they've always had them," said Ginny Lauritsen, a Sunday school teacher at Thurston. "Of course kids know how to shoot," she added, but said in her day they didn't carry semi-automatic weapons.

Kinkel entered the cafeteria in a dark trench coat and hat, carrying two pistols with ammunition reportedly spilling from his pockets, but picked off most victims with a .22 rifle.

For years now, when commentators have talked of a chilling loss of remorse in

American teenagers, they have meant the gang killers in the cities, the drive-by shootings and drug turf wars where the faces were almost inevitably black.

But since the killings moved to the schools, shooters and victims have mostly been white and rural. In the last six months, they have taken on the appearance of a national phenomenon.

The depths of Kip Kinkel's rage had yet to be plumbed yesterday. But whether he was psychologically imbalanced or badly brought up, his actions spoke of an anger that he could not control. He was said to have been voted by his contemporaries as "The person most likely to start a Third World War".

Springfield, a city of 45,000 was mostly a logging community until the mills closed ten years ago, but it has diversified since then, with Sony establishing a plant. Unemployment, locals say, is about as low as it can be.

The Thurston teenagers were certainly sophisticated and well-spoken. One, a boy scout on the wrestling team, had the old-fashioned courage to tackle Kinkel and continue to struggle with him after being shot in the chest.

It was a surreal experience to hear others describing scenes of graphic horror. "I thought it was a joke," recounted Emily Olson, 17, surrounded by giggling girlfriends. "Then he went up to this kid and shot him right in the head in front of me."

Kip Kinkel, liked to make bombs. Obsessed with guns and explosives, he was caught with a pipe bomb in his locker, and school rumour had it — well before the shooting — that he had once blown up a cow. He hid guns under his bed at home, it was reported.

Classmates said he could be sweet and funny, but also showed signs of an explosive temper, picking fights without cause, stopped for throwing rocks off a freeway bridge. He had been in an anger management programme, contemporaries said.

He bragged of torturing animals, and "he said it would be pretty cool to kill someone", said Brian Austin, 14, a classmate. Arrested at school the day before with a gun, he was released to the custody of his parents, facing expulsion, in a decision denounced yesterday as crazy by some locals, but defended as routine by police.

The last major school shootings were in March, in Arkansas, when an 11-year-old boy and his 13-year-old friend killed four students and a teacher. It followed others in

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The gun holds a special place in American culture — but at what price?

## 6,000 expelled for taking guns to school

The raw figures are terrifying enough. More than 6,000 American children were expelled last year for bringing guns or explosives to school, and 10 per cent of schools reported serious violent crimes. In Britain in 1995, 19 children under 19 died as a result of gunshot wounds. In Canada, it was 15; in Japan, none. In the US, the figure was 5,285.

But what is still more terrifying is that following the school deaths in Oregon, just as after the shootings in Jonesboro, Arkansas and all the others, the warnings and the demands for action will go unheard. "We have a very serious problem. It's an epidemic of gun violence in America's schools and we have to do the responsible thing," says Bob Walker, of Handgun Control Inc, a lobby group that is fighting to limit the ownership of small arms. "Every American has a responsibility to keep guns out of the hands of children," he told CNN on Thursday night.

Yet when the President made a speech yesterday, what was the great threat he identified? Biological weapons. The US is to increase its stocks of antidotes to anthrax and so on; the menace of guns will continue.

Everyone knows a Kip Kinkel at school — weird, maladjusted, a bit dangerous. He was voted the child "most likely to start World War III" by his classmates. One said that "he would, like, torture animals and stuff and tell us about it." But in Britain, the worst those kids can do is small beer indeed. They can't get hold of a semi-automatic rifle and spray their classmates with bullets.

In the US, the Constitution — written 200 years ago, when America was a frontier society, when guns meant single-shot muzzle loaders — protects the right to bear arms. And a significant part of American mythology is based around that right, the need to get mad and to get even through the great equaliser.

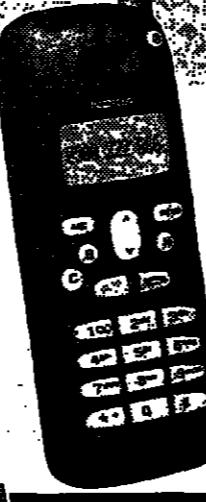
When a poll for CNN asked Americans who they blamed for tragedies like that in Oregon, 28 per cent blamed the parents. Mr and Mrs Kinkel, it seems, were the first casualties of their son's black, irrepressible fury early on Thursday morning in the district they called Shangri La. Then he put on his coat and headed out with a rifle under his arm and a pistol in his holster, with the US Constitution right behind him.

— Andrew Marshall, Washington

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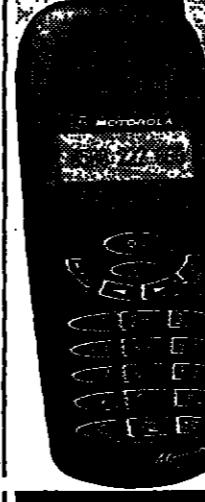
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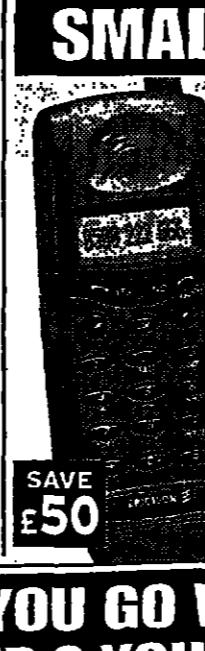
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# No home for Israel's Arabs

By Patrick Cockburn  
in Jerusalem

THE first time Sonia Khoury's apartment was attacked, men threw blazing petrol-soaked rags at her door. "My sister and I were sitting in my room at two o'clock in the morning when we heard knocking at the door. When we looked out we saw flames and smoke coming through the sides of the door."

It was the first of three fire-bomb attacks since Ms Khoury, 26, receptionist at the Hilton in Jerusalem, rented a flat in a Jewish neighbourhood of the city a year ago. She is an Israeli citizen and fluent in Hebrew, but also an Israeli-Arab, Israel's largest minority, and it is unheard of for an Arab to move to Jewish west Jerusalem.

Ms Khoury's new neighbours made clear what they thought of an Arab living among them. They asked the landlord to evict her, with her younger sister Wafa and their friend Manal Diab. Ms Khoury says that in her block "only one Israeli man supported us and said he did not mind Arabs living in the building."

What happened next shows the antagonism of many Israelis towards the 850,000 Israeli-Arabs. It confirms a survey which showed 40 per cent of Israeli youth say they actively hate Arabs and of these 60 per cent "want revenge".

The first sign was the word *nevella* scrawled on the apartment door. In biblical Hebrew it means a "rotting carcass".

Use of this archaic word may also imply that those behind the fire bombings had a religious nationalist or ultra-orthodox background. The first attack, which blackened the ceiling just inside the door, was in October. The women asked for police protection, which was refused. The second attack was in December. Ms

Khoury says: "They put bottles like those used in hair spray outside the door." The package exploded when a bomb-disposal officer tried to defuse it. He was saved from injury by his protective clothing.

Ms Khoury says: "We wanted to move but we could not find a flat. I couldn't sleep afterwards." The attack also brought publicity and a visit by Ehud Olmert, the right-wing Mayor of Jerusalem. He said they were in the same position as Jewish settlers at Ras al-Amoud, a Palestinian district of the city. Ms Khoury says: "We told him ... we did not come to this apartment and say it was ours, like the settlers. We rented it."

Mr Olmert said the municipality would help repair the flat, but nothing happened for five months. The women also found they could not claim compensation as "victims of terrorism" because the attacks were not deemed to be against Israel.

Police installed a video camera but no progress was made tracing the attackers. The women live near Mea Shearim, an ultra-orthodox neighbourhood, but the street is a mixture of ultra-orthodox, religious and secular Jews. Nevertheless, when the women walked past a nearby religious college, the boys shouted: "Arabs, go to Gaza; go to Jordan."

The final attack was on Israeli Independence Day, 30 April, when Ms Khoury was at work. Somebody placed what she described as a pipe bomb by the door; it exploded at 10.30pm when Wafa Khoury and Ms Diab were at home. The women, with nowhere else to live, asked the landlord to renew the one-year rental agreement, but he refused. Their neighbours were now more sympathetic, but said "Our children are frightened."

Ms Khoury, a Christian, was born in Nazareth, the daughter of a driver for the Israeli bus company Egged. She says she grew up not thinking of herself as an Israeli but not a Palestinian either. Her experiences since coming to Jerusalem have changed that. "I knew there was racism here, but I didn't expect them to bomb my flat."

The attacks confirm the conclusions of a survey last year of the views on Israeli-Arabs of 5,318 Israeli pupils at 34 schools carried out by Ofra Mazlles, of Haifa University, and Reuven Gal, from the Carmel Institute of Social Research. They found not only that 40 per cent said they hated Arabs but that among those who live in poorer towns, students at religious colleges and children of parents who came originally from the Middle East three-quarters expressed hatred.

Less animosity was expressed by students from kibbutzim, but even there 32 per cent said they hated Arabs.

The Oslo accords of 1993, purportedly offering a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, made no difference to attitudes. It is also ominous that Israelis expressing greatest dislike for Arabs come from constituencies which vote overwhelmingly for the present Israeli government. It is their views which will count most in determining government policy.

To their surprise, the Khoury sisters and Ms Diab have found a new apartment, also in a Jewish district of Jerusalem.

Ms Khoury says that for the first time when she rang up a prospective landlord and said "I'm an Arab", he replied: "I don't care." As the women prepare to leave, a municipal workman sent by Mr Olmert has finally arrived to repaint the blackened doorway and ceiling of their apartment.



Sonia Khoury at the door of her fire-bombed Jerusalem flat. Photograph: Bryan McBurney

## Lebanon's new beginning held back by history

Robert Fisk in Beirut charts the crazy voting patterns of tomorrow's elections

PLUS ça change, plus c'est la même chose. So, welcome to the Lebanese municipal elections, the poll that will, supposedly, transfuse fresh blood – a phrase to be treated with great care here – into the political system as 200,000 Lebanese vote tomorrow for 7,662 council seats and 2,041 "mukhtars" (village leaders).

The only problem is that every town and hamlet in Lebanon, save for 21 (of which more later), will have to elect a Muslim-Christian council in exactly the same proportion to the old retainers originally chosen 35 years ago.

Odd things have happened, though. The fiercely anti-Hizbollah, multi-millionaire prime minister, Rafiq Hariri, was flirting with the Hizbollah for a joint list last week against his rival Nabih Berri, the speaker of parliament. Now Messrs Hariri and Berri are talking about an alliance. High in the Chouf mountains, where Druze and Christians were slicing each other's throats in 1983, Druze leader Walid Jumblatt and Christian Maronite leader Dory Chamoun are making common cause to defeat independents and right-wing Christians. The exiled ex-General Michel Aoun (leader of a failed anti-Syrian "independence" war and current place of abode France) is backing a Summi Muslim lady to support his cause in Lebanon.

Take Abdul Rahman Skaf, for example; a Summi Muslim mukhtar from the Sidon area who claims to be 107. Sidon is a Summi town and will, indeed, must, elect a Sunni mayor. Mr Skaf, who remained mukhtar of one rural district for 40 years while the government automatically re-appointed him through the 16 years of civil war, believes he has grown too old for the job. So say all of us. But he's supporting his son Ahmed, to replace him. And Ahmed is almost 60.

Worse still, voters must cast their ballots in the town of

their birth. Thus in the 400,000-strong Christian city of Jounieh, only about 20,000 citizens are eligible to vote.

A Lebanese Catholic friend born in Mashghara must vote in his eastern Bekaa valley town, where Christians were 50 per cent of the population before the war. Now they are 5 per cent. Hizbollah guerrillas (Shia Muslim) dominate the town, so it's one of the 21 villages, along with the entire Israeli-occupied zone of Lebanon, exempted from the poll, whose councils will be reappointed by the government with the old 1963 potentiates in charge.

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Be sure that the results will make no difference. Be sure that enemies and friends will exchange places.

As that great Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran once wrote: "Pity the Nation divided into fragments, each fragment deeming itself a nation."



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# Clashes tested Indonesian army's patience

By Richard Lloyd Parry and  
Stephen Vines in Jakarta

HOURS before last night's confrontation between the Indonesian army and students started, there was a worrying portent of trouble to come, as thousands of Islamic supporters of Indonesia's President Habibie threw stones and scuffled with demonstrating students in Jakarta.

The incident occurred at the parliament building where students have rallied all week demanding reforms and a change of government. After the resignation of President Suharto on Thursday, they began to call for the head of his successor and former vice-president, BJ Habibie. "Habibie will be the second great disaster", read a giant banner draped across the main parliament building.

The banner was a target for some 5,000 Habibie supporters who burst into the parliamentary compound early yesterday, shouting "God is Great" in Arabic and rhythmically chanting Mr Habibie's name. After the crowd burst into the square where the students were peacefully listening to speeches, there was a dangerous stand-off which threatened to develop into a violent confrontation as the Muslim protesters tore down banners criticising the new president.

Student leaders pleaded with their followers not to be provoked. "We are one commando", they shouted in response to the Muslim chants, they like to describe themselves as a united commando group, fighting to bring democracy to Indonesia.



Muslim women, wearing headbands proclaiming support for new President Habibie, at the mosque inside Jakarta's parliament complex yesterday  
Photograph: AFP

The naming of a new cabinet has done little to increase confidence in Mr Habibie whom many in Jakarta see as an interim leader filling the gap between Suharto and a likely successor drawn from the ranks of the military.

The two most blatant examples of favouritism from Suharto's last cabinet have been sacked: the fallen president's eldest daughter, Siti Hardjanti Rukmana, who was in charge of welfare, and Bob Hasan, his golfing partner and trade minister. But half of the new cabinet is made up of old ministers.

"I am neither endorsing nor opposing the cabinet," said Amien Rais, the country's Muslim opposition leader. "The cabinet has a lot of technocrats in it but some of the names still reflect old ways."

General Wiranto, chief of the armed forces and one of the most powerful candidates to succeed Mr Habibie, stayed on as defence minister. Yesterday, in a statement that can now be seen as an oblique warning about the events that were to take place last night, he said student demonstrations would not be tolerated indefinitely. "I expect the students to end their mass actions and go back to their campuses to study," he said.

The Muslims claimed to be students but many of them were clearly not from college. Leaders denied they had been mobilised by Mr Habibie, but admitted he knew about the demonstration in advance.

It appeared some careful organisation had gone into the protest because the demonstrators came with professionally printed banners and head bands which helped to distinguish them from the students.

The restraint of the students defused the situation, though a second group of Muslim protesters arrived after the first had left. This smaller group were separated from the stu-

dents by soldiers who had not intervened when the first group arrived.

For much of 32 years in power Suharto was able to balance the interests of the Muslim majority, who make up 90 per cent of Indonesia's population, with those of minority races and religions. Although he is a practising Muslim, Suharto's style of

leadership owed as much to that of the traditional Javanese kings, as to the precepts of Islam. It was only very late in life, for instance, that he made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Mr Habibie, however, is seen as a much more committed Muslim, and yesterday's incident suggests he may yet become a focus of fundamentalist agitation.

"For 30 years Muslims had nothing under the New Order, and all the money went to Chinese and Christians," said Darwin Agus, of the Islamic Youth of Indonesia, one of the groups demonstrating in the new President's support. "Habibie is a good start in preparing for the next step, government by the Koran."

## Idealism expires as a Communist becomes Russia's rights monitor

By Phil Reeves  
in Moscow

IN A MOVE which symbolises the loss of the idealism that held sway in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse, Russia's parliament yesterday elected a senior member of the Communist Party to be the nation's human-rights commissioner.

The decision, part of a trade-off over jobs between parties, infuriated Sergei Kovaylov, the previous incumbent, a former dissident considered Russia's successor to Andrei Sakharov.

Mr Kovaylov, the country's best-known rights activist, who spent years in a Soviet prison camp for his activities, called the appointment of Oleg Mironov

a "foregone conclusion". He told the State Duma, or lower house, before being shouted down: "The shameless deal leading a Communist to this position is monstrous."

Rights groups, which blame the Communist Party for trampling individual rights during decades of repression, are certain to argue that the job of

commissioner, though vague (and lamentably under-funded) is needed, and should not be a mere chip in a political bartering process. The concept of human rights is still in its infancy in Russia. The 1993 constitution, which affords citizens considerable protection, is ignored at grassroots level and by the government. Abuses of individuals

by the legal system and the authorities - notably the police, who beat up prisoners and target ethnic minorities - are still widespread.

Such is the relative novelty of a rights commissioner that the role has yet to be fully defined, though he has the power to launch legal appeals for those who believe their rights

have been violated. He can also issue annual reports. The appointment of Mr Mironov, 59, a former law professor who is a member of the Communist Party Central Committee, ended two years of tawdry bargaining between parties over who should have the job.

In the end, the Communists appear to have been given it in

return for giving the pro-government party "Our Home is Russia" chairmanship of the parliamentary defence committee. Mr Mironov is now expected to quit the party. Among the 11 candidates were Mr Kovaylov, fired after publication of photographs which appeared to show him frolicking in a steam bath with two naked women, neither of whom was his wife.

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# France discovers art on the DJs' turntables

By John Lichfield  
in Paris

WHEN is a DJ an artist? The answer is when he is French and when he – artistically – plays more than one record at a time. The French music producers' federation has declared that some disc jockeys should be considered creators of music who have the right to claim a small part of the royalties of the records they play.

The decision, seven months old, has caused consternation among music publishers in France and elsewhere. It points to a startling phenomenon: France, the butt of rock-music gibes, is leading the way in the hottest variants of pop music such as techno and house. Both are associated with clubs where star DJs create their own musical sounds by playing two or



In the groove – but is it art?

a performer but an "ephemeral" or "instant" composer. Sacem collected £12m in royalties from 3,000 French dance clubs last year; this year, the first full year of its new ruling on royalties, £1m will go to disc jockeys.

The French trade association of music publishers has challenged the ruling, saying techno and house DJs are infringing the rights of the original composers. Star DJ-composers also exist in Britain and other European countries but some French DJs have become enormously successful and popular abroad – almost the first French pop musicians to break out of the national ghetto.

DJ Jack de Marseille, Laurent Garnier, Dimitri from Paris and others are in high demand in clubs throughout Europe. "At any other moment in the history

of pop," *Rolling Stone* magazine wrote recently, the words "Made in France" on a disc were "commercial suicide".

The DJs have no trouble accepting themselves as artists. DJ Jack performs two or three times a week in different European cities and issues albums of his live compositions. He argues that, by taking different records and merging them, he is creating a "new emotion ... a different feeling".

The Musicians' Union in Britain agrees. It is making a determined effort to recruit the new generation of DJs to its ranks. "Once you recognise them as musicians," said Tristan Evans, the union's spokesman, "you see that they're manipulating their turntables the way guitarists do with guitars". But does that make them composers?



Savita (left) and Deepika listening to a speech by the newly elected president of the All India Eunuchs Association at a conference yesterday in Bombay attended by 500 of the port's 12,000 eunuchs

Photograph: Sebastian d'Souza

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## IN BRIEF

### Row grows on leaky N-trains

GERMANY'S Environment Minister, Angela Merkel, was under pressure to resign after admitting trains carrying nuclear waste to Britain and France had been leaking radiation for a decade. French regulators measured radiation 3,000 times the permitted level on the trains. On Thursday Ms Merkel suspended the transport of nuclear material by train; she says she was first informed of the leaks on 24 April. Germany has no reprocessing facilities, so its waste is raised to Britain and France.

— AP, Berlin

### Old Dutch

DUTCH royals and windmill-keepers have launched a fund-raising project to preserve one of the most distinctive parts of the Netherlands' heritage. In their heyday in the mid-1800s, up to 10,000 windmills dotted the country, while only about 1,100 remain today.

— AP, Amsterdam

### Unkind cut

A WOMAN who suspected her husband of sexually abusing their daughter cut off his penis with kitchen knife while he slept and flushed it down the toilet. Doctors could not find the penis of Fidel Flores, a 38-year-old taxi-driver, and could only seal the wound, police said.

— AP, Lima, Peru

### Just the ticket

FRANK and Shirley Capaci were celebrating after paying a barman \$5 (£3) for a chance of winning the largest US lottery jackpot. Although officials had to confirm it, the Capacis said they held the winning Powerball ticket, worth \$104.3m.

— AP, Streamwood, Illinois

## Doctors use robots to aid heart surgery

By John Lichfield

the chest, between one and four centimetres wide.

The professor, sitting in front of a video screen three metres away, manipulated the micro-instruments attached to robot arms, which are capable of responding instantly and with extreme precision to the surgeon's commands.

The surgeon really feels he is sitting in the middle of the patient's heart," Professor Carpenter said. "He has greater precision and a better view."

The next step, he said, would be to attempt operations which would be "very difficult or impossible" using the human hand and traditional instruments.

Operations conducted by a surgeon many miles away would not be possible with existing telecommunications technology. Even at a distance of 100 miles, there would be a potentially disastrous, delay of up to one second before the robot arms responded to the surgeon's commands. The company which developed the technology believes, however, that within five years developments in communications technology will allow commands to be transmitted instantly over long distances.

This would allow eminent surgeons to conduct operations on patients thousands of miles away. The company believes that robotic heart surgery may become the norm, even for routine operations. The new technique avoids a large incision in the chest, and allows more precise surgery. Patients are less exposed to infection and should recover more rapidly.

## 'Born again' Charlie Sheen suffers drug overdose

By David Usborne  
in New York

ONLY a year after declaring that he was shedding his bad-boy lifestyle and had found religion, actor Charlie Sheen was yesterday recovering in a Los Angeles hospital from a reported drugs overdose.

Sheen, the star of *Platoon*, *Wall Street* and the son of Hollywood veteran Martin Sheen, was admitted to the Los Robles Medical Center in the early hours of Wednesday, complaining he had difficulty walking and was experiencing tingling in his hands. Some reports suggested he arrived at Emergency in a state of hysteria and had to be tied down.

A visibly distraught older Sheen arrived at the hospital late Thursday to quash reports being broadcast in Los Angeles that his son had suffered a stroke or had died.

"The first thing I want to assure you is that my son, Charlie Sheen, is very much alive," Mr Sheen said. "He's eating, he's talking, he's aware."



Charlie Sheen: Admitted to a Los Angeles hospital

No details were available on what kind of drug Sheen had taken. Three years ago, he told the *New York Post* of his battle with ecstasy. He said: "Ecstasy should be called the drug from Hell – because that's where it leaves you."

Mr Sheen has suffered repeated bouts of bad publicity, dating back to 1990 when he checked himself into a drug and alcohol rehabilitation clinic. In 1995 he was sued by a woman who claimed he struck her around the head after she refused to have sex with him.

Most humiliating, perhaps, was his leading role in the 1995 federal trial of Hollywood madam Heidi Fleiss, purveyor of prostitutes to the stars. He admitted he had ordered at least 27 call girls from Fleiss and had run up bills with her totalling \$50,000.

At the end of 1996, after ending a six-month marriage to model Donna Peele, Sheen announced he was becoming a born-again Christian. Fast living, he said then, "was a lot of fun, but there is such a thing as too much fun."

Martin Sheen said he was hopeful he would be able to persuade his son to re-enter a rehabilitation programme after his recovery from the latest scare.

He recalled how his actor friend Carroll O'Connor had been devastated when his son killed himself in March 1995 after struggling for years to defeat a cocaine addiction. "I'm sorry Carroll didn't get the chance that we have. This is not an easy moment in our lives, but it's a necessary one. Our hope is that he will accept recovery and be fine."

Get y  
the n

# Silent scream of Rwanda's youth

JEAN PETER, 16, looks through his lashes with huge brown eyes, fingers the plastic rosary beads around his neck and offers a shy smile. "They say I killed a child," he whispers. "But I didn't. I was only 12. How could I be a *genocidaire*?"

On bare dirt feet, he stands in the middle of a dusty compound, south of the Rwandan capital, Kigali, which he shares with 350 boys - the country's youngest genocidal killers. One little boy was just six when he took part in what came to be the murder of 800,000 Rwandan Tutsis and moderate Hutus in 1994, at the incitement of Hutu extremists.

Near the high-perimeter wire fence, draped with the children's drying ragged clothes, Jean Peter's tiny friend, now 10, also tries logic. "They say I am an Interahamwe [the Hutu extremists which led the genocide]," he says. "But I am too young to be an Interahamwe."

Another boy tells a garbled story. "We had a baby in our house who disappeared. His mother accused me but I know the baby is not dead. People have seen it at its mother's house."

The genocide in Rwanda contaminated every sector of society. Judges, politicians, peasants, even nuns and priests, manned the infamous roadblocks to trap fleeing Tutsis. They wielded machetes until the bodies of Rwanda's minority - 15 per cent of the population to the Hutus' 85 per cent - were piled high. Women and children played their part in the collective madness; and some were stars, not mere bit players.

Four years on, the child killers of Gitagata re-education centre have started to return to their home villages. It is a slow, painful process, says Gitagata's director, Jean-Baptiste Rudasingwa. The first 12 left the centre last month. Though they were the youngest, it was still hard to persuade their old communities to take them back.

To leave Gitagata you must confess your crimes and appear to understand their gravity. There are no hard-faced thugs here, only kids in cut-off jeans and faded, torn American T-shirts who try to evade a cigarette or a Biro. But they have slaughtered and raped. Many specialised in torturing victims hiding from the mob. Among

Mary Braid, in Kigali, finds a generation in torment; child killers and witnesses alike locked into genocidal memory



The young men of Gitagata re-education centre, south of Kigali, waiting in line at mealtime; the boys deny taking part in the massacres of Tutsis

Photograph: Didier Ruef/Network

those released early was a child who killed three other children.

If release relies on public confession before one's peers, then no one here is going anywhere. "Not one of us has confessed to genocide," says one older boy. According to Mr Rudasingwa it is a different story in private sessions with social workers.

"They admit they killed," he says. "They were used particularly to kill other children. They say their fathers told them to. If they asked why they had to kill neighbours their fathers said the government had issued orders."

In the build up to the genocide, intricately planned by the extremist regime, national radio spewed out anti-Tutsi propaganda instructing Hutus to kill the *byenye* (cockroaches). The victims were so vilified that when the killers stripped them they fully expected to find tails. The brothers and fathers of these boys are among the 130,000 accused *genocidaires* swelling Rwanda's adult prisons.

Until last year the boys of Gitagata were also held in adult jails where human-rights groups condemn the conditions as "appalling". Mr Rudasingwa

says the children were sexually harassed.

At Gitagata, opened last year by a government under pressure from international agencies, there is comparative luxury, more than 50 boys to a dank, dirty dormitory with four sharing each set of makeshift bunkbeds (two up, two down). There are daily group counselling sessions but no schooling after primary. Though the boys are locked up at night, by day the compound gate is open and they mix with local children. That is a minor triumph considering the initial hostility of locals.

It must be hard for Rwanda's new Tutsi-led regime to concede that the young *genocidaires* are victims too. There are so many other obvious child victims, and so few resources to go round.

On the same wall, Alice, 11, writes that her mother begged to pray before she died but her killer, a neighbour, would not let her. Alice tried to forget the pain, she says, but the memories keep flooding back. "My mother liked to sing," she remembers. "I stopped singing because it reminded me of her."

Few children in Rwanda have escaped unscathed. In the three months it took to kill 800,000 people almost every child witnessed violence; much of it unbelievably brutal. Some children saw their pregnant mothers sliced open and the

fetus slaughtered; boys were forced to rape their mothers.

In a study of more than 3,000 Rwandan children, Augustin Gasoya, a psychologist at the trauma centre, found that almost 80 per cent lost relatives in the war; 40 per cent lost both parents and 55 per cent their siblings. Almost 70 per cent said they witnessed murder and 80 per cent remembered hearing screams for help. More than 9 per cent believed they would also die while 50 per cent witnessed massacres and 35 per cent saw other children kill or injure. The horror continues.

## Khmer Rouge plotted against allies

PHNOM PENH (AP) — The Khmer Rouge was plotting a return to power by betraying partners in peace talks and installing a government in Cambodia similar to its genocidal regime of the 1970s, according to papers discovered near the home of the late rebel leader Pol Pot.

The politically explosive papers lend credence to the strongman, Hun Sen's assertions that his bloody coup against his co-prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who backed the negotiations, was justified in order to stop the Khmer Rouge.

The papers, obtained by the bi-weekly *Phnom Penh Post*, provide the most detailed look yet at the mindset of the revolutionary movement from the time Pol Pot was overthrown as leader last June until January this year.

Three notebooks filled with dated entries were found near Pol Pot's hilltop home close to



Prince Ranariddh: Backed negotiations with guerrillas

him and set up their own agrarian regime, apparently not very different from the one that caused the deaths of as many as 2 million people from forced labour, starvation and execution between 1975 and 1979.

Pol Pot, 73, held under house arrest by his ex-comrades, died of a purported heart attack on 15 April during a retreat by Ta Mok's troops from a government offensive.

Ta Mok and other senior Khmer Rouge leaders seized power after Pol Pot executed his one-time defence minister, Son Sen, in a dispute over whether to hold peace negotiations with Prince Ranariddh.

The prince pushed the talks forward, but Hun Sen opposed them and toppled the prince in a bloody coup last July until January.

The papers show that the Khmer Rouge had planned to join Prince Ranariddh's opposition coalition, the National United Front, to rebuild their own weakened forces and start clawing back power legally.

They were plotting to betray

the Thai border, occupied this month by the Cambodian army. The Post, Cambodia's most respected newspaper, published the accounts yesterday. They quote Ta Mok, the one-legged general who deposed Pol Pot, accusing the former leader of stealing money from the organisation and saying he "flattered himself as the world's king".

Pol Pot had \$54m (£33m)

spread across three bank accounts, senior guerrillas cited in the papers claim. The movement had tens of millions more in cash, gold and gems.

Prince Ranariddh believed before he was deposed that the talks with the Khmer Rouge would gain him military and political support against Hun Sen.

The Khmer Rouge leaders say they were promised control of local bodies while the prince's supporters would control provincial political machinery. Since he was ousted, Prince Ranariddh has repeatedly denied that his armed forces had formed an alliance with the Khmer Rouge.

The papers tell a different story and show the guerrillas had little respect for their allies.

They were plotting to betray

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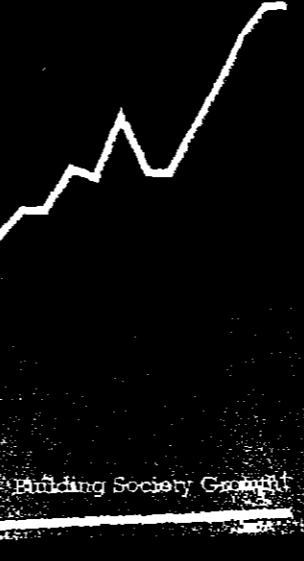
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# Auntie shows her bloomers

Can it be true? The BBC has funded a new drama series which sends up the lunatic goings-on behind its own closed doors? By James Rampton

AT A MEETING in Broadcasting House, the Controller of BBC Radio 4 marvels at the proliferation of new managers in his network. "Well done," enthuses the Controller of Radio 2. "The more people you have doing the job you used to be able to do on your own, the better you're doing. Management is what the BBC does nowadays. Surely you know that... If the director-general makes the BBC any more efficient, it'll disappear. Think how much licence-payers' money he could save if we just stopped doing programmes altogether."

This delicious scene comes from *In the Red*, a new comic three-part murder mystery which portrays a BBC ruled by ruthless efficiency-drives and incomprehensible management-speak. The two controllers – played with evident relish by Stephen Fry and John Bird – go on to plot the downfall of a philistine director-general whose sole concern is money.

But who is making this seditious drama? Surely, it's a new offering from Sky, owned by that arch-critic of the BBC, Rupert Murdoch? Or perhaps it has been produced by ITV, constantly battling with the BBC for ratings supremacy? Er, no. This mischievous new piece of BBC-bashing is actually being made by the BBC. Talk about a public act of self-immolation.

John Bird – no, not Birt – applauds the BBC for making the series, which has been adapted by Malcolm Bradbury from Mark Tavener's novel. "You spend all the film saying what an awful place the BBC is, but the BBC is the only channel in the world that would make something about how appalling it is. It's also the only place where it would matter: if you said how appalling HTV was, nobody would care."

Tavener, who himself had a stint working at the BBC, also commends the corporation's bravery. "It is a great reflection of maturity of the part of the BBC that they are prepared to send themselves up on their own network. Can you imagine Sky commissioning 'Rupert Murdoch, You Pilloff'?"

Mature or not, there is a suspicion that the BBC will forever use this as a force-field against criticism, a sort of "Get Out Of Jail Free" card. By getting their own retaliation in first, they hope that other more vicious critics won't be so swift to put the boot in. Are you watching, the *Daily Mail*?

Yet, for John Sessions, who plays the

part of Hercules Fortescue, a pathetically pernickety BBC personnel officer, the fact that the BBC are making *In the Red* "is like the emperor walking through a crowd with a man whispering in his ear that he's human or hitting him with bladders. It's the hallmark of healthy democracy. You always need a bit of *Splitting Image* in society."

The series captures the sense that politicking often seems more important than programme-making at the BBC. "I've always had the impression that Television Centre is like a Renaissance court," says Bird. "There is this feeling that the executives are cardinals in a Jacobean tragedy waiting to poison each other. There is the First Murderer and the Second Murderer. That carries over into this series."

"Then there's all this management-speak. They now have directors – I thought only the KGB had directors. It's amazing, just like John Le Carré. There's this absurd thing of BBC departments having to buy Q-Tips and studio-time from each other. They used to say that in Russia, nobody knew what anything cost. At the BBC that's all they know. The message the series ends with is that the lunatics should be put back in charge of the asylum – which is a good idea. It should be run not by the people who talk Harvard Business School-speak, but by the lunatics, the people who make programmes."

As you might expect, all this has ruffled a few Armani-clad feathers in the higher echelons of the BBC coop. "There have been requests for scripts from senior BBC sources," Sarah Smith, the series producer, says coyly, "and there was a flurry of phone calls about the director-general character."

Disquiet in the corporation was only heightened when it emerged who had been cast as the director-general: Michael Wearing, the maverick former head of drama serials who left the BBC after some not-too-flattering comments about the way the organisation was being run. "We auditioned a lot of people for that part," Smith explains, "but it was hard to find someone who has the right gravitas. When Michael accepted the part, he said, 'I approve of anything that gives the BBC a sense of humour.' After initial concern at the BBC about the casting, they decided they should take it as a joke. It would have been far worse PR to ask us to re-shoot the

director-general scenes having already spent all that money on them."

Sessions trusts that the BBC will be able to see the funny side. "In the Soviet Union, if they didn't like what somebody said, they'd send them to the salt mines. I sincerely hope John Birt doesn't react in the same way. Can you imagine the headline? 'Richard Wilson [who plays the chairman of the BBC Board of Governors] vanishes – he's having to work for Grampian and teach Scottish county dancing in the Cairngorms'."

Smith also believes the BBC should be big enough for a bit of internal mickey-taking. "I'd be much more worried about the BBC if no one there had commissioned this. I would have been very sad if I'd had to take the project to Channel 4 – that would have been almost the end of the BBC as far as I'm concerned. It would have been far worse PR to turn it down than to make it. At the end of the day, it's only jokes. If the BBC aren't strong enough to take jokes, then the world is in a parlous state."

In the series, the BBC is merely a paradigm of the way huge corporations are in-

creasingly in the grip of bureaucracy. "I'd put the BBC together with any large organisation – the NHS, or the education service – in the way that it has undergone what I call a 'managementisation' process," Smith says. "Everybody will recognise it. The series has a go at that culture. The hero, George Cragge, is a bloke

creative people feel crushed by them. Whether it's in a university, a school or a hospital, management-speak is very much in play and accountants and bottom-liners have the upper hand."

One such is Fortescue. "He's a deeply sad and anal man," Sessions says. "He's got his PhD in Physics from Bangor and now

Cragge (played by Warren Clarke), an unreconstructed, old-school BBC crime reporter who is losing the battle against the forces of red tape

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"Who is making this seditious drama? Surely, it's a new offering from Sky, owned by that arch-critic of the BBC, Rupert Murdoch

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# True romance – or just a microceleb on the make?

Ann Treneman  
investigates a match  
made in tabloid  
heaven and finds that  
all is not as it seems

THE village of Great Stukeley near Huntingdon, is home to John Major and not a lot else. Only the birds make much of a noise around here. Crime is low and you can see why: the only thing I can think of taking is a nap. But all of that changes when I start to ask a few questions about the former Prime Minister's son James, and his brand new fiancée, Emma Noble. Then, as Major senior himself would say, things got considerably more lively.

"News is created by the media and not by real people," says Bernard Crocombe at the Three Horseshoes pub. "Why don't you ask me about my son? What about your sex life? I think it's appalling that you are asking about their sex life!" I protest. I am not asking about anybody's sex life. Another businessman turns it into a privacy issue. "There is too much about people's private lives in the press and the media generates it," he states with a flourish. The landlord was jollier, but just as sure. "I'm sure the Sun is behind this. They are behind everything in Britain!"

Wrong. The story of Emma Noble and James Major is not about private lives, sex lives or even the Sun. It is about money and influence and the strange Nineties world of the instant micro-celebrity. The media is a player and a pawn in this game, but the strings are being pulled by a branch of the public relations industry called personal management. In this case the man who

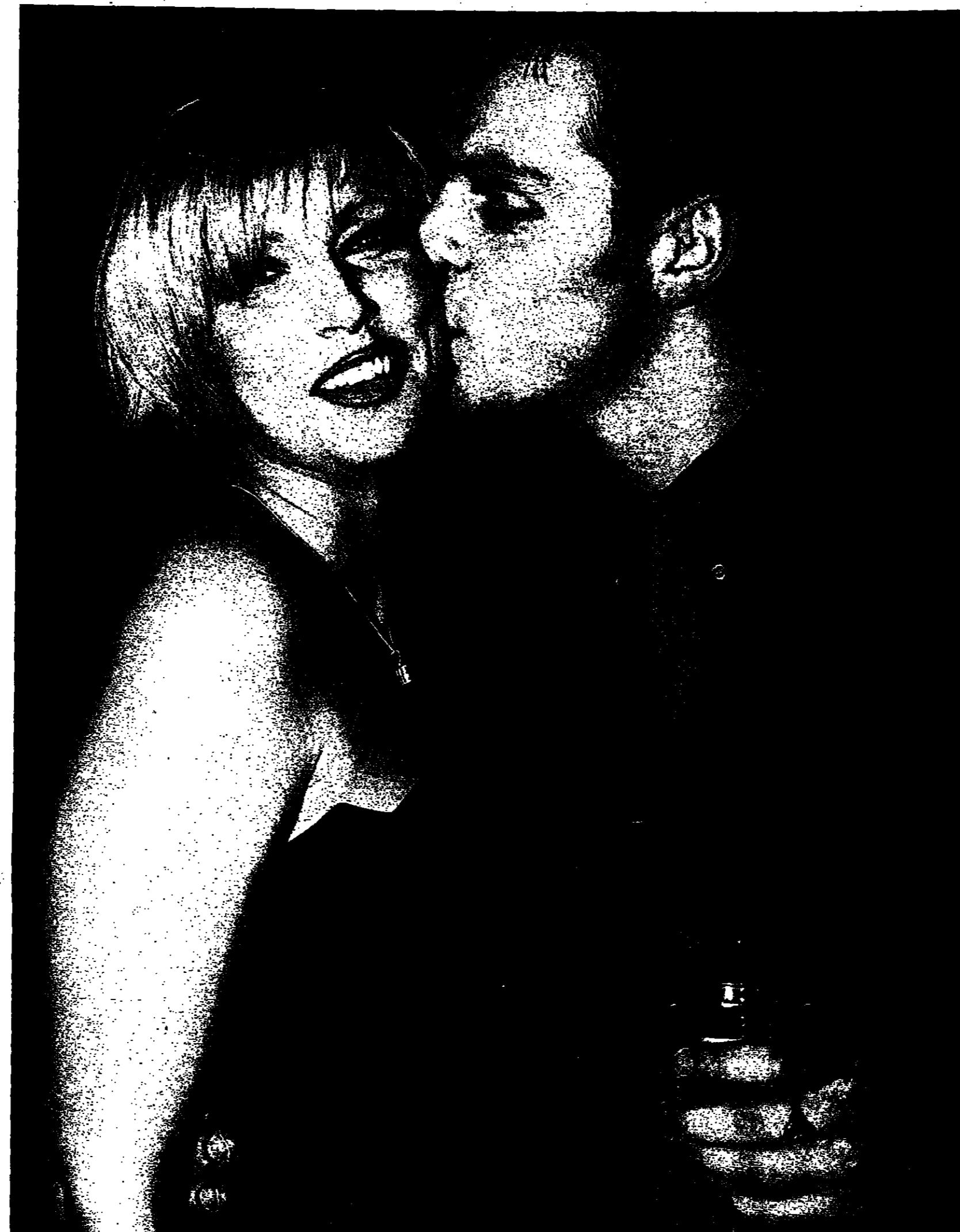
'It was instant attraction over champagne,' said one of those friends who talk to tabloids

should step forward out of the shadows is Neil Reading. At 28, he may look like a schoolboy but no one (except he) would deny he has the Svengali touch. He manages many others too, including the likes of Michael Flatley and, yes, Melinda Messenger.

It has been a good week for him. Three months ago no one really knew or cared about James and Emma except friends, family and the odd patron of glamour calendars and TV game shows. Last week the two got out of a taxi and made the front page. The news? Well, James had on a velvet suit and Emma was wearing, er, not very much really. As the *Mail* said (over the picture): "That's a nice suit James." As the *Sun* said (over the picture): "Fashion or trash?"

The answer, as it turns out, was *haute couture* actually. On closer inspection – it was that kind of picture – the dress was revealed to be a transparent vision by the design wunderkind Julien MacDonald. It cost £2,500, was on loan for the night and the only other one that exists is on loan to Janet Jackson. The dress comes with a black slip, the designer's studio said, and the slip was definitely sent with the dress to Ms Noble. Somewhere – the rumour is, in the taxi – the slip got lost. So, when Ms Noble stepped out of the taxi, her G-string was showing. Was that couture too? No, said the studio, that was the model's own.

So how did this all happen? After all



James and Emma only met each other on 19 February in the Green Room nightclub at the Café Royal in London. The answer to that has to be: pretty damn fast.

Emma, 26 and from Sidcup, left her local comprehensive at 16 to become a hairdresser, but quickly found that modelling (and particularly topless) paid more. She changed her hair. "I used to have dark hair," she said in 1995, "and would always get chosen for the sultry shots, but now I'm blonde and I'm trying to be sweet and sexy,

not sultry. But I suppose you've got to stick with what you do best." Her breasts got larger. "My bust enhancement was my own personal choice," she told *Hello!* "There is no way I would change my body just for my career." She has been on the books at the Samantha Bond model agency for some eight years and, for the last three of those, has been a hostess on *The Price is Right*.

James, 23 and from Great Stukeley, was educated at £4,500-a-year Kimbolton School, near Peterborough. He left with

three A-levels to become a management trainee at Marks & Spencer. His parents never allowed any publicity shots of the family and, until Emma, Major Jnr's only claim to fame was his relationship with a woman 12 years his senior. He recently left M&S for a job at the Green Room. (It may sound out of character but, don't forget, this is the family of garden gnomes and trapeze artists.) He is a bit of a lad and very much one that likes and is liked by the girls.

And so, on 19 February, Emma met

James and two worlds collided. "It was instant attraction over a glass of champagne," said one of those friends who always seem to talk to the tabloids. "They just got along." Within four days he had taken her to meet his parents. The Majors have said they liked her a lot. But then they would, wouldn't they?

Perhaps the most important factor in what has happened over the past few months is that at some point this year Ms Noble decided to leave her agency.

"We think it was about four months ago. She wanted personal management and we are a model agency," said Mike Diamond, of Samantha Bond. I catch up with Neil Reading on his hands-free mobile and he says that Emma came over to him in January. So not after she met James then? "No," he says, "that is absolutely not true."

The first we saw of James and Emma was the "canoodling" picture at the pre-Bafta bash in early March. Neil denies managing this, personally or otherwise. "It was a slow week in Fleet Street and the whole thing went bananas. Let's face it, if there had been some proper news around it would have made a lead in *William Hickley* or *Dempster* and perhaps page three of the *Sun* and the other red-tops. But it's hardly front-page stuff."

But surely he made a phone call? (Photo agencies, PR and the celebrity mag and tabloid trade all work so closely that such things can take place almost by osmosis.) Neil protests again, perhaps a little too much. "I didn't even know they were going! The first I knew was when [the *Mirror* editor] Piers Morgan rang me at 8 o'clock that night and said: 'Neil, what is your client doing with James Major at *Planet Hollywood*?' Right."

Neil Reading is not saying much about the nuts and bolts of his job. "I'm not going to tell you what I do," he said. OK, but what is the key factor with someone like Emma Noble? "It's not just a question of making them a household name," he says. "It's positioning them correctly within the media."

The past few months have been busy on the positioning front. Mr Major has decided to leave the Green Room to set up his own nightclub. Ms Noble has left *The Price is Right*. She wants to be a television presenter. So far she has presented one edition of *Exclusive* on Channel 5 and something is in the works with ITV. Her endorsement fees have reportedly risen

The Majors have said they liked her a lot. But then they would, wouldn't they?

from £2,000 to £7,000 for a few hours' work. She is in demand with "hundreds" of calls coming in. She has granted a few interviews and posed with bra and cat for *Hello!*

And there was also the little matter of a proposal. This took place at the Monte Carlo Music Awards in early May. The official announcement appeared in the *Times* on 14 May. The unofficial one appeared in the *Sun* on the same day. The headline was "Amazing Love Story". It was a short courtship but such things do run in the family: after all, John Major proposed to Norma Wagstaff after knowing her just 20 days back in 1970. The occasion, in their case, was the GLC elections.

Neil Reading is hurt by claims that James and Emma's only true love is publicity. "There has been lots of bitching and sniping, saying the whole thing is a PR stunt and that the relationship was created. This is not the case." He says the wedding, when it comes, will not be public. I'm not sure I believe him. "If it wasn't that the two of them are so in love and such strong-willed people, the media could quite easily have split them up," he insists.

So you see how the media is to blame again. Back in Great Stukeley, the afternoon is wearing on. I find Martin Gross hammering a shed together in his back garden. He says Emma and James may be in love but they also certainly like the publicity. And the outcome? "Let me put it this way, I don't see a wedding."

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## Give politicians a chance, too

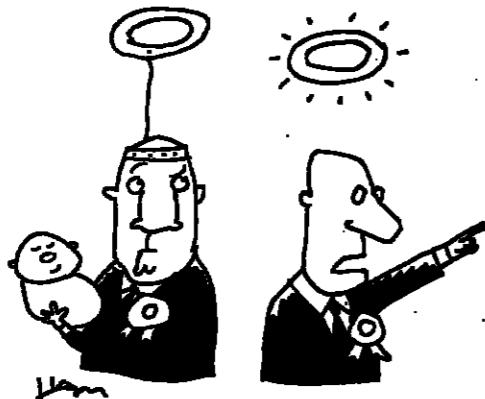
IT IS easy to be cynical about our politicians, especially in a week when one former Cabinet minister has been charged with perjury and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. But, as we wait for the results of yesterday's referendums, we should consider the achievement of the architects of the Good Friday Agreement. John Major and Tony Blair had no need to get involved in trying to solve a problem which had ruined the careers of politicians going back at least as far as Pitt the Younger, forced to resign when the King refused to allow Roman Catholic emancipation.

Mr Major's motives were both intangible and honourable. He identified Northern Ireland as one of his first priorities when he became Prime Minister, although he found it hard to pinpoint why. "It had been in my mind for a long time... The thought kept running through my mind that if the killing was happening in Surrey it wouldn't be acceptable. But I was never in a position to do anything about it. When I came to No 10, however, I realised I was in a position to do something about it," he told his biographer, Anthony Seldon.

Tony Blair's motives are similar. Again, as a man of reason and compassion, he felt compelled to use the power of high political office to do what could be done to prevent, or at least minimise, the killing. Bertie Ahern, John Hume, David Trimble and Mo Mowlam equally deserve high praise for their public service.

It is a far cry from the popular view: "Only out for themselves. Tell you what you want to hear. All as bad as each other." Common sentiments, but wrong. A few politicians are venal, corrupt, self-seeking and amoral. And, as a group, they tend to be over-endowed with vanity and ambition. But they also tend to be more idealistic than the average, and more practically concerned with the welfare of their fellow citizens.

Most politicians follow a familiar sequence. They start as idealists, impatient with compromise, and become gradually more pragmatic with age. Often, amid the ruthless calculations necessary to make it to the top, they lose sight of the human values which first inspired them. In any case, the service of the public good becomes easily confused with vainglory. One of the motives for any prime minister in Ireland has always been to secure their place in history. Indeed, all the architects of the Good Friday Agreement want to bask in public approval. That is no bad thing, however, and as a criticism it is a far cry from the cynical assumption that all politicians are sleazeballs.



Politicians are subject to many universal human weaknesses: they can be stupid, greedy and dishonest. But they are also more likely than most to seek, as John Smith said in his unintended epithet, "the chance to serve". Theirs is the spirit of restlessness on which civilisation has been built: the desire to order society better, to make a difference to people's lives.

As a class, politicians are as much distrusted as lawyers and journalists, but they are, as one commentator has characterised them, "honest opponents". As we await the verdict of the peoples of the island of Ireland, we should pause to praise the politicians.

## If only Blair's Babes would complain

IT WAS a formidable sight a year ago as they gathered round Tony for that picture. Some were *ingénues*; some craven followers of the line; others first-rate additions to the legislature – in proportions no different from the new men in town. What the women had in common wasn't the "Babe" tag or the suits. What they offered was the promise of their numbers – here, at last, critical mass, sufficient women members of the majority party to make a difference to the conduct of the House of Commons itself. Surely they, New Labourites, modernisers, would want to launch an assault on this temple of antediluvian working practices, stupid ceremony and the dullest of rituals. Yet they haven't. They have fitted in, kept mum, gone with the many flow of things they always were. Some women MPs have even become apologists for the system, its hours and its paraphernalia. Their capitulation ranks as one of the greatest disappointments of the Blair era.

That's why the *Tribune* attack on "whingers" is misplaced. If only they had complained and done something about it. Feminists! Then at least we might have seen them pressing unstoppably for alterations to the antiquated practices of the place. It's not a question of party loyalty. Women MPs elected in Blair's landslide were obliged to hew closely to the line on big-ticket issues such as taxing and spending – though it has been surprising how little back-up they have offered. Harriet Harman in her battles over quintessentially "women's issues" such as childcare. What is so dismaying is that as a group, a formidable parliamentary phalanx, they have done nothing to force Ann Taylor's hand during her review of Commons' conduct. Why shouldn't debates take place when the rest of the country works? Why no experiments with electronic voting, properly equipped offices, regional sittings (for select committees), new rules of debate? If the job takes an unacceptable toll on family life, change it.

Yet this ambiguity of attitude on the part of the women elected in 1997 is, unfortunately, all too symptomatic of this government's worst tendencies. It looks good. The rhetoric promises much. But when it comes to the sheer slog of institutional change, the will and the energy are just not there.

## Nosey nanny state

THE NANNY state has poked its nose in the window of the wendy house. Trading standards officers have issued a warning about the safety of outdoor playhouses. "danger points" include hinges and windows which can trap fingers, splinters and protruding nails. Well, we never. This is surely taking public protection too far: in the end safety features cannot substitute for parental or *in loco* vigilance. Trading standards officers could better employ their scarce resources in protecting consumers from dangers they cannot judge, such as forgeries, genetically-modified or irradiated food and cowboy electricians and gas fitters. Time to make the playhouse out of bounds to Nanny.



A French high-speed TGV train, popular with passengers, but heavily subsidised (see letter, below right)

### PoWs' protest

Sir: The majority of Far East PoWs

who survived brutal treatment at the hands of their Japanese (and Korean) guards have received disability pensions of up to 100 per cent since their return to Britain 53 years ago. Others will have received *ex gratia* payments amounting to thousands of pounds. This recognises that it is the duty of a country to look after its nationals who suffer as a consequence of war service; it is not that of the former enemy.

In terms of overall financial compensation, therefore, the PoWs continue to come off immeasurably better than those who did the actual fighting against the Japanese and were killed in action. (They have much else to be thankful for, least, their lives.) The parents of my 19-year-old orderly killed in an attack on a Japanese position in Burma received a one-off lump sum payment of £50 for the loss of their brave son. This amount was less than each PoW received from Japan under the terms of the 1951 Peace Treaty.

As to the demonstration planned against the Emperor of Japan (report, 22 May), which must also insult the Queen, members of the Burma Campaign Fellowship Group, including former PoWs, refuse point-blank to have any part of it. Those PoWs and civilian internees who turn their backs on their Sovereign and her guests will forfeit the nation's respect. They must call off their money-driven protest and instead help Britain and Japan to enter a new era as friends and partners.

JOHN NUNNELEY  
Chairman, Burma Campaign  
Fellowship Group  
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

### Arts Council walkout

Sir: Gerry Robinson's decisive action at the Arts Council will be applauded by most artists who have long represented the self-interest groups which have made up the bulk of the Executive's so-called panels of experts and yeamed for a serious and professional Arts Council. Few have desired the panels' intercession and many been suspicious of the self-appointed committees which have developed.

Executive staff, highly respected by practising artists, and with a broad overview of the arts and serious knowledge of their own art forms, will now be able to get on with what they do extremely well indeed – talking directly to artists and taking decisions for which they are both responsible and accountable. Decisions in which I doubt that anyone but Thelma Holt and her fellow panelists ("Exit left as Arts Council drama panel resigns", 21 May) will regret the passing of "all these names, handpicked by me". It has never been sensible for colleagues in a notoriously competitive profession to sit in judgement upon each other or for panel members to ride two horses – participate in grant decisions while benefiting from the public purse, the same pot, themselves.

Gerry Robinson's work is not about cost-cutting. It is about letting the buck stop in the right place and providing a clear set of rules for decision-making which is finally and properly transparent and professional.

JULES WRIGHT  
Artistic Director  
Womans Playhouse Trust (WPT)  
London E1

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

### Hague's damaging stance

Sir: You describe (leading article, 21 May) William Hague's Eurosceptic position as laid out in his recent speech in France, as a largely political gambit; a position which is advantageous for both himself and his party to adopt, regardless of the national benefits. This stance is not only mercenary, but also potentially very damaging to the interests of those whose votes he seeks.

In terms of overall financial compensation, therefore, the PoWs continue to come off immeasurably better than those who did the actual fighting against the Japanese and were killed in action. (They have much else to be thankful for, least, their lives.) The parents of my 19-year-old orderly killed in an attack on a Japanese position in Burma received a one-off lump sum payment of £50 for the loss of their brave son. This amount was less than each PoW received from Japan under the terms of the 1951 Peace Treaty.

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JOHN NUNNELEY  
Chairman, Burma Campaign  
Fellowship Group  
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

### Mothering: a full-time job

Sir: As Oliver James points out (Britain on the couch, 19 May), whether our nature (genetic inheritance) or our early nurture is the more important determinant of how we turn out, is still subject to full investigation. He rightly emphasises the importance of this research because "many clinicians believe early infantile neglect is an important cause of mental illness in adulthood".

In the absence of this vital evidence, it seems to me extraordinary that the Government is prepared to spend vast sums of taxpayers' money on encouraging mothers not to bring up their young children but to hand them over to childcare agencies. I would use the funds to provide substantial tax benefits to mothers who care for their children up to the age

of five, based on the precautionary principle that society does not need more emotionally damaged and disturbed children, teenagers and adults.

I find it difficult to understand why women feel impelled to have structured, ladder-climbing careers like men. I have enjoyed three "successful" careers – the most fully rewarding of which was motherhood. DR ANNE-CAROLE CHAMBERLAIN Ardross, Ross and Cromarty

Sir: Suzanne Moore wonders what mothers did before they went to work (Comment, 20 May). Being a mother is work and no other job requires the same diversity of skills as being able to negotiate, arbitrate, manage one's time and answer a range of questions from why does an aeroplane remain in the sky to who will buy me when I die.

For the child, shouldn't it be their right to be mothered by their mother?

For the child, shouldn't it be their right to be mothered by their mother? Why do women have children only to hand them over to be cared for by someone else? Going out to work is the easy option; your day is structured for you, your job description written. I would challenge anyone to produce an adequate job description for "mother of two", unless, of course, the main responsibility was paying the child-minder. LESLEY WILLIAMS Kings Stanley, Gloucestershire

### Parc teething problems

Sir: I welcome Stephen Shaw's letter following his recent visit to Parc Prison (21 May). His generous comments on the design of the prison and the commitment of our staff are much appreciated.

As with all new prisons – both public and private – Parc has had teething problems and an action plan has been drawn up to rectify them.

As a governor with more than 30 years' experience in the Prison Service, I am wholly committed to implementing best practice at Parc.

Earlier this week the Home Secretary indicated that privately built and managed prisons offer best value for money. His statement follows a report by the Home Affairs Select Committee which concluded that privately managed prisons should be allowed to develop further.

I am determined to ensure that the performance of Parc Prison continues to improve and believe that the quality of service at Parc will just

tify the Government's confidence in the private prison sector.

BOB DIXON  
Director, HM Prison Parc  
Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan

### Third World debt

Sir: Andreas Whittam Smith (Comment, 19 May) is wrong: there is no paradox at all in the concept of lender's responsibility. My father, a retired banker, describes what was dinned into him as the "canon of good lending": that lending is a proposition based on the borrower being able to repay and having a sufficiently good reason for taking out the loan in the first place. Any lending which runs the risk of becoming an unrepayable debt or ruining the borrower is bad lending.

That the Third World borrowers have on occasions been corrupt or naive is not open to question. But the real paradox is this: the poor saw little or no benefit from the loans, and are now being expected to bear the brunt of the suffering.

JAMES M B MC LAREN  
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

### Fight to save duty-free

Sir: To accuse duty-free campaigners of "greed" for trying to save one of Europe's most popular and successful industries, employing over 140,000 people, is as insulting as it is uninformed (leading article, 20 May).

Independent studies of the implications of abolition cannot be so arrogantly dismissed as "extreme predictions". Abolition of duty-free will affect everyone – costing EU taxpayers up to £6.3bn over the next five years. The fight to save duty-free goes on.

BARRY GODDARD  
Secretary General  
Duty Free Confederation  
London SW1

### Army discipline

Sir: Your leading article on the "grappling chaplain" (20 May) is unduly censorious of the Army. Inappropriate sexual behaviour is not unknown in many workplaces and social contexts, and is usually ignored.

Only in the Army is it deemed necessary to hold a court martial, inevitably attended by media reports. ANTHONY BILLINGTON  
Horsham, West Sussex

## QUOTE UNQUOTE

"I wonder sometimes: will life ever stop moving at this impossibly whirlwind pace?" – Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, discussing his job.

"I didn't know Mars Bars were kosher. How wonderful!" – The Prince of Wales.

"As we can now see clearly, the Government's new ethical policy turns out to be mainly paint and plaster" – Lord (Douglas) Hurd, former Foreign Secretary.

"If I was a politician and I got up to this sort of stuff, I would worry. But I'm a silly-faced actor and it's my

job" – Martin Clunes describing the TV hit *Men Behaving Badly*.

"If knowing what you want and going for it makes you a bitch, then that's a label I would like to earn" – Elizabeth Wurtzel, writer and feminist campaigner.

"Conservative Party policy is not unlike a Wagner opera. It is not always as bad as it sounds" – Jerry Hayes, former Conservative MP.

"I was the original Spice Girl. I didn't wear boots, but I wore see-through things. There's nothing they wear that I didn't wear" – Shirley Bassey.

An agony  
head of ch

DAVID  
HARONOV

Beware

TREVOR  
PHILLIPS

HELEN  
JOHNS

### Cost of high-speed trains

Sir: Murray Hughes (letter, 22 May) cites the expected increase in the share of Paris-Brussels travel held by train as evidence of the popularity of high-speed trains. He does not say what the subsidy on this line is, but according to a recent report from your Paris correspondent, less than half the cost of the French TGV system is covered by fares. Would these trains be so popular if passengers had to pay the full costs?

One traditional justification for subsidising railways is to divert traffic from the environmentally damaging modes of travel by air and road. But it is not clear that high-speed trains, as distinct from conventional trains, are more environmentally friendly than air. Moreover, by releasing airport slots now used for short routes such as London-Paris or Paris-Brussels for longer air journeys, the introduction of high-speed trains actually increases air travel.

Very little car travel consists of journeys between the centres of large cities, which are the natural market for high-speed trains. It is certainly desirable to reverse the trend towards longer car journeys, but subsidies to the competition are an expensive and ineffective way of doing so. The problem is best tackled by lower and better enforced speed limits, perhaps accompanied by increases in the cost of motoring.

We need better rural and regional passenger services and more rail freight. We do not need high-speed trains.

STEPHEN PLOWDEN  
London NW1

### Cruelty to hedgehogs

Sir: Newton Emerson (letter, 22 May) is in error concerning the case of the student killing a hedgehog in a microwave oven.

No human being was harmed, it is true, but hedgehogs are not just as they are living and, more importantly, sentient creatures. It was an act of appalling cruelty reflecting a singular lack of compassion for living things. Many people do find this disgusting.

Mr Emerson wrongly asserts that the law has a higher obligation than to reflect society's disgust. It is not a crime to lack compassion. It is to give expression to it, and the law against cruelty to animals is on the statute books for the same reason other criminal law exists, because society finds the actions proscribed to be seriously unacceptable.

STANLEY TYRER  
Burton  
Lancashire

### Paying the Saudi nurses

Sir: The release of the nurses Lucille McLaughlin and Deborah Parry by the Saudi authorities seems to have prompted a remarkable change of heart on the part of the tabloid press.

Only a couple of weeks ago, judging by their reaction to the Mary Bell case, it was morally repugnant to pay convicted criminals for their stories. Are we to assume then that their moral outrage is simply the bawling of those too slow to get an exclusive deal?

HELEN JOHNS  
London SE5

## An agony uncle writes: take no heed of the generation gap



DAVID AARONOVITCH

WELL, when some old showbiz round-ups and weds a lass 30 years younger than him, we know exactly what's going on, don't we? It's the vampire's need to renew itself by sucking the lifeblood of youth. And if it is a famous late-middle-aged Her battenning on the flesh of a Him almost young enough to be her husband, then we are all reminded (those of us old enough, at any rate) of Ursula Andress in the film version of *She*.

But, somehow, when it's the Treasury spokesperson for the Liberal Democrats who is getting hitched to a woman half his age, it all seems less sinister. Malcolm Bruce, aged 53, is not some ageing star attempting to prolong his professional life by bathing in girlish hormones. For a start, in politics it doesn't do to look too young. And Mr Bruce is a well-established sweetie of the kind who wears ties at home on Saturdays.

Yet his marriage later today to 26-year-old Rosemary Vetterlein has brought them both a flood of unwanted advice and unsolicited comments (some of them in this paper) - mostly unsupportive.

Columnists and agony aunts have pointed out that Rosemary is old enough to be his daughter, and - indeed - is almost exactly the same age as his daughter. And they are not over-impressed by the couple's insistence that they themselves are not bothered by the gap. If they are not, goes the argument, then they bloody well ought to be.

I suppose I ought to preface this section of my scribblings by stating the obvious truth that none of this is anybody's business but the Vetterlein-Bruces, and that perhaps we journalists ought to save our advice for those who ask for it. However, the horse is long since bolted from that particular stable, its copious droppings stale on the cobblestones leading to the wide world. So maybe the best I can do for Malcolm and Rosemary is to explain why I think they have done the right thing.

In these pages yesterday, the estimable and usually generous Virginia Ironside

catalogued the pitfalls that lie ahead of the happy pair, while admitting (grudgingly and in an undertone) that it just might work. And it is, initially, to the items in her catalogue that I wish to address myself.

Item one is the "oldest dad in the playground" argument. All the other fathers, runs this legend, are lumber men, bright of eye and fleet of foot. These chaps run races and catch balls with their enchanted offspring, they are vitality and vigour acting as a tonic, chasing away childish enervation. But if Malc and Rosie were to have babies together then - by the time they are in school - he'll be in his dotage. He won't be able to see the ball, let alone kick it. A new verse here for Ralph McTell: Have you seen the old man outside the nursery gates?

But it's all a myth. I'm a dad of 43 and I have never had to work so hard. Consequently, I'm never in the bloody playground. Never mind football, by the time the weekend comes it's all I can do to keep awake while we watch a video together. Yesterday, I barely managed to make it my five-year-old's class assembly because I had to - among other things - slave away at this article.

Had I been 65, though, and retired, I could have stuck around after the performance and congratulated her. What my children want is my time, and when it comes to that, frankly, they would be better off if I was 20 years older or 20 years younger.

Okay lets move on to the inevitable "but he'll die first". Well, darlings, someone's got to. There was a brief vogue in the Seventies for simultaneous orgasms, but they were hard enough to organise - simultaneous natural death must be harder still. So, one partner or the other is going to spend some time bereaved, and which would be preferable: losing your old man when you're young enough to do something about it, or having him snuff it when you are in your declining years and incapable of forming new attachments?

Virginia's most ruthless argument, however, concerns sexual incompatibility. He'll be past it, she says, just when She'll be gagging for it. Now, my first thought is that this is a happy inversion of the usual situation, and will cut out all the headache nonsense. But my second is that the long-term answer is, of course, to have children. Small children depress the libido of even the most rapacious woman almost as much as football does, and for longer. By the time they are old enough to no longer act as a sexual brake, the chances are (as we've discussed) that He'll be dead, and She can look elsewhere.

Finally, I want to deal with the most insidious Ironism of all: what she calls "social generation". Old Malcolm, born in the mid-Forties, will have been a young man when the Beatles were in full flight, when San Francisco was the place to be, and when Mick stomped the stage suggesting that we spend the night together. Rosemary, on the other hand, was only six when Johnny Rotten gobbed his first phlegm over Julie Burchill. The gulf is too great.

But this too is nonsense. In the first place, practically all modern hits are simply cover versions of old records. My eight-year-old constantly asks me if I know a newly released song - and I then sing her all the words.

And, in the second, it wasn't just grannies buying Sinatra albums in the shops this week you know.

good for them. But there is a lurking contradiction in the Government's stance which may herald the first signs of the wheels coming off the bus.

Mr Blair is no fool. He knows he still needs union backing to deliver many of his plans. Labour Conference resolutions, for example, may mean little to New Labour, but they still have the power to make business nervous. The Conservatives claim that the unions gave Labour £110m during the opposition years, and with the prospect of endless political campaigning for local, regional, national and European tiers of government, no Labour leader can afford to dampen the unions' enthusiasm for the People's Party.

But you don't have to be cynical about it. The family-friendly workplace with provision for parental leave, the right to claim unfair dismissal earlier than at present, and the abolition of the ceiling on awards for unfair dismissal all represent an extension of individual rights of the kind that Blair has talked about frequently.

Broadly speaking, the thrust of the reforms is to encourage workplaces to recognise new patterns of work which involve frequent changes of job, and the need to make time for families. The package will also give trades unions a push towards focusing on the individual rather than the collective rights of workers. This is in some ways inevitable, given the trend towards individual contracts. The overall tone of the White Paper should endear the Prime Minister to his union friends.

But the administration, as in so many areas, has been at pains to stress its difference from previous Labour governments. One manifestation of the Third Way is that the party of Labour is no longer the

## Why the world's most famous capitalist hated the free market



DAVID USBORNE

WATCHING Bill Gates defend himself hours after the Justice Department dropped its long-awaited anti-trust shoe on his software behemoth, Microsoft, last Monday, you were struck by a serenity in his demeanour. Through his boyish visage, there shone a conviction that he, not the government, is on the side of the angels.

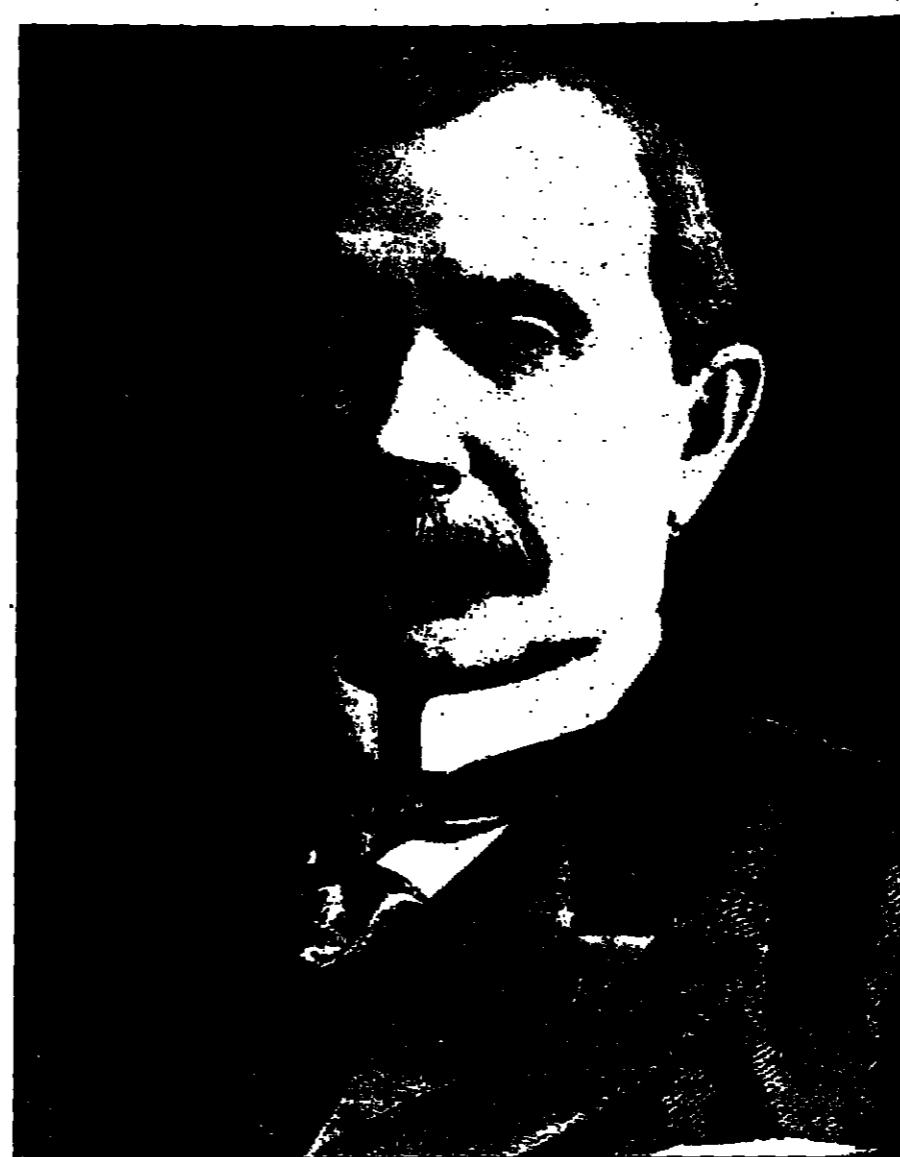
The lawsuit, which accuses Microsoft of manoeuvring to extend its crushing grip on the software industry to the newly discovered terrain of the Internet, was dismissed in indignant tone by Mr Gates as "a step backwards for America, for consumers and for the PC industry, which is leading our nation's economy into the 21st century". If Microsoft is guilty of anything, it is of innovating for the good of all of us.

To fend off the devils of a bad conscience, tycoons have always armed themselves with rationalisations of their tactics. Today, thanks to the scholarship of the business biographer Ron Chernow, we have the chance to view the psychology of Mr Gates against an especially illuminating historical backdrop - the story of that other icon of American enterprise who fell foul of Washington, John D Rockefeller Sr.

With fortuitous timing, for readers and author, Mr Chernow has just given us *Titan*, an opus appreciation of Rockefeller that is being greeted as the most insightful and compelling read ever written about the man who created Standard Oil. He was helped especially by the discovery of 1,700 pages of notes of interviews conducted with Rockefeller himself for an authorised biography that never saw the light.

Has Mr Gates read it? He should. While comparisons between himself and Rockefeller should be taken only so far, the echoes from the days of Standard Oil - from its founding by Rockefeller in 1869 to its break-up by order of the US Supreme Court in 1911 - to the predication of Microsoft today are, at the very least, uncanny.

It was, for example, largely as a result of Rockefeller's ruthless reign that the Sherman Antitrust Act was signed into law in 1890. It is on that same act, still the Magna Carta of US government supervision of free



A face to make trust-busters quake - John D. Rockefeller

Photograph: Hulton Getty

competition, that the Justice Department bases its action against Microsoft today.

And the two men are tied in this fashion: both stumbled at young ages upon a new element that was to revolutionise society. For Rockefeller it was oil, that first gushed from the Pennsylvania sod in 1859, and for Gates it was the birth of the computer. Moreover, each managed to gain a near-90 per cent of the market in their chosen commodities, kerosene for the one and PC operating systems for the other!

What Rockefeller committed to win that dominance, however, was surely more wicked than anything Gates could now be charged with. He crushed almost all his refining rivals by a combination of predatory pricing, industrial espionage, the secret ownership of companies that pretended to be rivals and, above all, the securing of hidden rebates from railroad companies for every barrel they shipped, not just of his oil but of oil produced by his competitors also.

One small illustration offered by Chernow: grocery stores offering kerosene from independent refiners were liable to find that, suddenly, a competing store would open across the street in which every-

thing, not just kerosene, would be suspiciously cheap.

Most infamously, in 1872, shortly after Rockefeller did his rail deal, he perpetrated the "Cleveland Massacre", in one stroke taking over 22 of his 26 rivals in the city. The result of the Rockefeller strategy of buy out or crush was the trust - or, more accurately, the monopoly - that Standard Oil quickly became. Or the "Octopus", as contemporary reporters took to calling it.

At the heart of Chernow's book is the description of a man who, unlike Gates, believed that, whatever others cared to say, his achievements were ultimately all for the greater good of society. Indeed, it was many years before public distrust of Rockefeller gained politically viable momentum.

And for good reason. Rockefeller seemed to embody the qualities, beloved by Americans, of buccaneering enterprise and personal advancement. Moreover, Standard Oil cut the average price of refined oil from 23 cents a gallon to 7 cents.

Similar dynamics have applied to Mr Gates. While Mr Gates has earned enemies in his own industry, as Rockefeller did in his, for many ordinary Americans he remains a hero rather than a villain.

Most astonishing, however, is the logic that Rockefeller espoused in justifying the cruelty of his methods. Read Chernow and you wonder if the man we have considered the greatest capitalist of them all was actually a disciple of Karl Marx.

He concluded in his own mind that the free market, so keenly espoused by the new liberal thinkers of the time, was instead a pestilence that had almost crippled Standard Oil.

It faced the intrusions of Johnnycome-lately refiners rushing for their share of the oil boom.

He fulminated against the "chaotic conditions in which vicious academics Know-Nothings about business ... were doing what they construed to be God's service in eating each other up".

And for good reason. Rockefeller, a devout baptist, would surely have blessed his model of doing business. He gently called it one of "co-operation" between players on the same

team; we, today, might prefer terms like cartel or monopoly. "What a blessing it was," he opined, "that the idea of co-operation, with railroads, with telegraph lines, with steel companies, with oil companies came in and prevailed."

Critics who charged him with destroying competition, had misunderstood his saintly mission. He referred once to Standard Oil as "the Moses who delivered them [the refiners] from their folly which had wrought such havoc in their fortunes". He went on: "It was not a process of destruction and waste; it was a process of upbuilding and conservation of all the interests ... in our efforts most heroic, well meant - and I would say, reverently, Godlike - to pull this broken-down industry out of the Slough of De- spond."

Was Rockefeller perhaps a little crackpot? How, in one personality, could two such disparate instincts be combined? The God-fearing figurehead, who, as Chernow amply illustrates, was a man and devoted husband and father, and the ruthless con- niver who knew no greater drive than the appetite for money?

"I believe it is my duty to make money," Rockefeller said, "and still more money". In the same breath: "And to use the money I make for the good of my fellow man according to the dictates of my conscience."

And, indeed, the largesse of Rockefeller, also detailed in *Titan*, rightly established him as one of the greatest philanthropists America has ever produced.

The singular legacy of Rockefeller, however, was surely the Standard Oil ruling of 1911. It resolved the competition-vs-co-operation argument by setting in stone the equation of a free market governed at the same time by strict rules of fair play. And it established the right of the federal government to act to make sure those rules are obeyed.

What words might John D. import to Gates if he were alive today? He would advise first against underestimating the power of the Sherman Act. And he would also note this irony: the dismantling of Standard Oil made him far richer than he had ever been before.

## Beware the Fossil Tendency flexing its muscles



TREVOR PHILLIPS

I HAVE been a member of four different trades unions in my lifetime. Most of the ordinary trades union members I know are not activists. But I understand how trades union leaders operate about their members.

The rank-and-file's attitude to trades unionism is almost precisely the attitude that most people have to serious journalism on television: it's not really for them most of the time - but thank God it exists in moments of crisis.

So far, there is hardly a workers' revolt over the government's White Paper *Fairness At Work*. Few union members are probably aware of it; and even fewer want to think about it. They are content to trust that the Automobile knows where it is going, and that the destination will be good for Britain and

The package will also give trades unions a push towards focusing on the individual rather than the collective rights of workers. This is in some ways inevitable, given the trend towards individual contracts. The overall tone of the White Paper should endear the Prime Minister to his union friends.

But you don't have to be cynical about it. The family-friendly workplace with provision for parental leave, the right to claim unfair dismissal earlier than at present, and the abolition of the ceiling on awards for unfair dismissal all represent an extension of individual rights of the kind that Blair has talked about frequently.

Mr Blair knows he still needs union backing to deliver many of his plans

prisoner of the unions. Nor its leader, it appears, in any way constrained by his own pre-election promises.

The row over the threshold proposed for union recognition is no accident. Ministers are proposing that the unions must have 40 per cent of the workers voting "yes" before recognition takes place. This is an idea which the CBI likes, which is fine, except that it isn't what Labour said during its election campaign. It is also an enormous hurdle to recognition.

Even if there are no battles of this kind it will still leave the mass of trades union activists.

So, the spin put on the threshold issue has made it seem more important than it really needs to be. The fact is that any workplace with more than 50 per cent of workers in union membership will have to recognise the union without a ballot. Unions will have the automatic right to represent individual workers in grievances and at tribunals, and those individuals will be free to join a union.

The strategy for most unions in most places will be to pick up members one by one until recognition becomes automatic. That, I would guess, is how it will happen in the majority of workplaces. However, the threshold provides the platform for grim set-piece battles of the old-fashioned kind.

Who wants to return to the days of unions accusing bosses of intimidation, or to introduce the sight of sharp-suited "consultants" wandering the corridors and the floors explaining workers that they would be better off talking to their bosses individually and separately from the unions? The result could be a return to some of the unpleasant industrial standoffs of yester-year which gave unions a bad name, and frightened managers into being paternalistic doormats.

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## Wolf Mankowitz

THE JEWISH community of London's East End has produced an amazing variety of talent. Some have made their careers in the commercial and financial worlds, while the very significant contributors to the arts have tended to be many-faced. Joan Littlewood, Steven Berkoff and Mark Anthony Turnage are just a few of the names that spring to mind, but even among such exceptional people, Wolf Mankowitz stands out as a strong and individual voice.

When London first became aware of him as a writer in the early 1950s, he had already made a name for himself as a dealer and authority on antique porcelain, especially Wedgwood. His experience came from working in street markets, then in his own lock-up shop, a practical schooling that he put to good account, becoming both a scholar and (with R.G. Haig) the editor of the *Concise Encyclopaedia of English Pottery and Porcelain* (1957). In 1953 he had published his definitive book, *The Portland Vase and the Wedgwood Copies*, which paid much attention to the copies of that famous Greek antiquity made by Josiah Wedgwood.

Mankowitz's special talent was to make an abstruse and specialised subject read like a detective story, and *The Portland Vase* sold well. Wedgwood, even in mass-produced modern copies, remained fashionable and Mankowitz cashed in by opening a glittering new shop in the Piccadilly Arcade in London.

At the same time he was us-

ing his former experiences, both as a street trader and as a bright young boy with an observant eye – not least for the main chance – to write short novels, which were published by André Deutsch; these became very successful. *Make Me An Offer* (about an antique dealer in search of the Portland Vase) appeared in 1952 and *A Kid For Two Farthings* a year later. They were both filmed in 1954, directed by Cyril Frankel and Carol Reed respectively.

Next Mankowitz began to write for the theatre and scored a considerable success with *The Bespoke Overcoat* (1953), in which David Kossoff played Morry, at the Arts Theatre in London, a role he repeated many times. Nobody appeared to notice at the time that the play was an update of a Gogol short story. In 1958 he wrote a musical, *Expresso Bongo*, based on the career of Sammy Steele, which was filmed the following year.

He followed it with a great outpouring of novels, short stories, plays, musicals and film scripts (including *The Millionaires* in 1960 and the James Bond film *Casino Royale* in 1967), some of which were successful with the public. With his ebullient self-confident personality he was always able to convince producers, but in spite of the volume of work, he retired to a comfortable house and small property on the southwest coast of Ireland to continue writing and to take advantage of the government's generosity to writers, who pay no tax. There he turned to art and began to make collages; some have been exhib-

ited in Dublin and London.

In 1982, he took a post teaching theatre at the University of New Mexico as well as being Adjunct Professor of English there. He stayed until the late Eighties before moving back to Ireland.

Wolf Mankowitz was a man of many parts with a voracious appetite for knowledge, an outgoing personality, attracted to women, a good talker, with an underlying interest in philosophy which developed particularly during his illness from cancer in his last years. Much of his work shows an ironic sense of humour, an understanding of human motivation and weakness, and a compassion for those unable to rise from the underside of society.

The works that are likely to survive longest, and which are most often revived in small theatres by such enthusiastic character actors as Leonard Fenton, are the early plays, and *The Irish Hebrew Lesson* (1978), written about the Black and Tans, although the author had the IRA in mind.

Visits to Central America inspired his work and in 1971 he became Honorary Consul to the Republic of Panama in Dublin, a post which gave him some amusement, but little revenue. In the Seventies he retired to a comfortable house and small property on the southwest coast of Ireland to continue writing and to take advantage of the government's generosity to writers, who pay no tax. There he turned to art and began to make collages; some have been exhib-

ited in Dublin and London.

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Fenton, are the early plays,

and *The Irish Hebrew Lesson*

(1978), written about the Black

and Tans, although the author

had the IRA in mind.

His compulsion towards suc-

cess marrred work that with

more attention and time would

have been better, but he became

stoical about that at the end. At

his best he was a craftsman with

an ability to communicate with

his public in all mediums and to

make the complex simple and

interesting.

John Calder

Cyril Wolf Mankowitz, writer: born London 7 November 1924; married 1944 Ann Seligman (three sons, and one son deceased); died Dur- nes, Co Cork 20 May 1998.



On the set of the film *A Kid For Two Farthings*. Mankowitz (right) wrote the original book and the screenplay; Carol Reed (left) was the director

Photograph: Ronald Grant Archive

## Roy Evans

ROY EVANS was the Mr Table Tennis who helped bring two super powers together in what became known as "The Ping-Pong Diplomacy". It all began in 1971 when Evans, in his capacity as president of the International Table Tennis Federation, was invited to stop off in China on his way to Japan for the World Championships. He was summoned by the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai, who asked him to ban Vietnam from the event because at the time the two countries were sworn enemies.

Evans turned the request down flat on the basis that both countries were members of the ITTF and had to be dealt with equally. In a counter move he suggested that China invite top Western countries to visit them on their way back from Japan.

It was a significant step in thawing relations between China and the United States. The Chinese sent their request to America after first seeking agreement with the State Department and the visit followed.

A year later, in February 1972, President Nixon visited China. It was as a direct result of the Ping-Pong Diplomacy though Evans hated the slang name for his sport.

Evans also instrumental in getting table tennis into the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, after a 10-year battle for recognition. This earned him the award of the Olympic Order from the IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch.

The elder son of the Table Tennis Association of Wales's first treasurer, Morgan "Mog" Evans, Roy played for Wales between 1931 and 1933 and was honorary general secretary of the sport's governing body in Wales from 1933 to 1939.

From there he moved on to become honorary general secretary of the International Federation from 1951 to 1967, before holding down the office of ITTF president for the next 20 years. He was named honorary life president in 1987. He was appointed OBE in the 1972 Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Evans's wife, Nanci, was in her younger days seventh in the women's world table tennis rankings, in 1938. They met when the Welsh men and women players were brought together for practice in Cardiff before a match against England in 1929. Together they travelled the world; in a book published last year, *Coloured Pins on a Map*, Evans related that he had been to at least 50 countries to promoting table tennis.

In the Second World War he had served as a flight-lieutenant in Burma. After being demobbed he went straight to a table tennis match between Cardiff and Newport.

Roy Evans's working hours were spent with the steel firm GKN; he retired in 1972 as general sales manager of the Bolt and Nut Division at Darlaston.

Robert Cole

Maureen Constance Guinness born 31 January 1907; married 1930 Basil East of Ava (succeeded 1930 as fourth Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, died 1945; one daughter, and one son and one daughter deceased), 1948 Major Desmond Buchanan (marriage dissolved 1954), 1955 judge John Maude (died 1966); died London 3 May 1998.

Roy Evans, table tennis official: born Cardiff, 8 October 1909; married 1933 Nancy Jackson (one daughter deceased); OBE 1972; died Cardiff 18 May 1998.

## Maureen, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava



Maureen with her husband, the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, at the State Opening of Parliament, 1938. Photograph: Hulton Getty

HER somehow 18th-century rococo title, her flamboyant image and penchant for practical jokes and occasional litigation made Maureen, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava the stuff of more than 70 years' worth of high society gossip columns.

Granddaughter of the first Earl of Iveagh and daughter of Ernest Guinness, Maureen was already appearing in those columns in January 1924, when it was noted that she and her two sisters, Onagh and Aileen, "vivacious young daughters of Ernest Guinness", had left "Socialist Britain" to join their father's yacht *Faucombe II* on its leisurely world cruise. As one of the Bright Young Things, all blonde bob and blue eyes, she provided a focus for a media age which fed on such celebrities.

As Andrew Barrow's 1978 book *Gossip* proves, Maureen Guinness's every move was noted: when she stayed at Longleat for Henry Bath's coming of age party in July 1926, it was worthy of remark that her current nickname was "Teapot". Her peer group included Evelyn Waugh, Harold Acton, Bryan Guinness and his fiancée, Diana Mitford; her best friend was Teresa ("Baby") Jungman, and Maureen swelled the ranks of that "adoring group of Guinness girls"

whom Cecil Beaton so envied. On 3 July 1930, she married her cousin Basil Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, styled Earl of Ava, son and heir to the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, at St Margaret's Westminster. "The best brain of my generation", according to James Lees-Milne, he became Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Colonies and a Government Whip in the Lords; when Maureen gave birth to their son, Sheridan, in 1938, it was noted that she was wife to one of the youngest members of the Government.

The family lived at Clandeboye, a 3,000-acre estate in County Down, but Maureen continued to play her role in London society, her forthright manner not always admired. She told Hugo Vickers how, in 1935, Beaton introduced her at a dinner party: "Do you realise that you have here, in Maureen Dufferin, the biggest bitch in London?" Their friendship was severed for some years.

Clandeboye became dilapidated during the Second World War and required substantial injections of cash to keep it up. When the marquess was killed in action in Burma in 1945, Maureen discovered the house had been heavily mortgaged to meet gambling debts. Three years later she married Major Desmond

Buchanan, retaining her title "out of deference to the wishes of her first husband". She was given away by her 10-year-old son, Sheridan. The marriage lasted just six years; in 1955 she married as her third husband Judge John Maude (he died in 1986).

In 1949 she became director of the family business, the Guinness brewery. "It's hard to say what my duties will be," she told the press, who believed the marchioness to be a teetotaller, "but I think I shall go into the office every day." Beyond her society profile and her homes in London, Kent and Sardinia, Maureen Dufferin found time for charitable works, from the faintly ridiculous – in 1954 she played a ladies' lavatory attendant in Princess Margaret's charity amateur production of *The Frog at the Scala Theatre* – to the more substantial founding of a holiday home for arthritics in Lamberhurst, Kent.

Throughout the Fifties and Sixties she played her role as part of the international set who moved restlessly around the world. In 1961 she visited Noel Coward and the Flemings in Jamaica, and in 1965 was "the rehearsal" for Coward's famous lunch party for the Queen Mother. In the meantime, her progeny distinguished themselves, not least in their marriages. The outspoken and talented author Caroline Blackwood (who said she found her childhood too painful to speak about) married, in succession, Lucian Freud, Israel Citkowitz and Robert Lowell, while in 1964 the flamboyant and basically homosexual Sheridan married Lindy Guinness, daughter of Noel Guinness.

Family feuding broke out in the long-running legal battle of the 1990s, when Maureen Dufferin's daughters and daughter-in-law brought a lawsuit challenging her right to transfer the benefit of a trust fund to her granddaughter Eviegenia and Ivana. The dispute was settled in 1995 (her somewhat inexplicable concerns over money having already surfaced in 1980 in an acrimonious legal dispute with a butler accused of stealing crab apples and tea towels). Despite such shortcomings, Maureen Dufferin was remarkably attractive, animated, personable, and possessed of a forthright manner. She appeared to relish her part in the BBC's "expose" film by Philippa Walker, *Guinness*, in which she was interviewed at length and spoke with candour about her relations. Even in her nineties she was still throwing lively annual dinner parties for

the Queen Mother at her home in Knightsbridge, at which the likes of Sir Alec Guinness and Barry Humphries could be found. Indeed, in later life the marchioness – the model for Oberon Lanchester's Maudie Littehampton – appeared also to have inspired Dame Edna.

She was truly a survivor

from another era. When I met her at a book launch in 1996, she was wearing an exaggerated black oilskin coat (it had been raining heavily), a 1940s-style fur coat with padded shoulders, platform shoes and pale blue and multicoloured rhinestone spectacles. When I was introduced as Noel Coward's biographer, she remarked,

"What a pity they didn't have sperm banks in those days" – the word "sperm" rang out loud and clear through the reverent hush of Hatchards: "we could do with more Noel Cowards." Some might think we could do with more Maureen Dufferin, too.

Philip Hoare

## FAITH & REASON

### How to turn religious beliefs into a nuclear explosion

Indarjit Singh, editor of the *Sikh Messenger*, examines the role of faith in the Indian sub-continent's atomic arms race

THERE IS always a strong temptation to lay the blame for the violent or disconcerting behaviour on the sub-continent at the door of religious extremism. The latest culprit is Hindu fanaticism, widely blamed for India's recent atomic tests. The danger is that such simplistic labelling not only distorts the truth but, by smearing essentially peaceful religious teachings, also strengthens the hand of political opportunists ever ready to use religion as an offensive weapon.

The recent history of the sub-continent provides ample evidence of the manipulation of powerful religious sentiment for irreligious political ends.

Before partition, millions of Hindus and Muslims lived peacefully side by side in Punjab and Bengal. Then, as the common dream of independence from foreign rule became more and more likely, Congress politicians began cultivating the Hindu majority for mass

support, causing alarm among Muslims. Minority support for a Muslim homeland rapidly became an unstoppable demand. Alarm grew to suspicion, hatred and the mass murder of neighbours whose lives and destiny had been entwined for years. The irony of partition was underlined in the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971. When captors and prisoners in Punjab met face to face as ordinary human beings, they fearfully embraced each other and reminisced about the good old days when they had lived together as honest and trusting neighbours.

While it was caricatures based on religious sentiment that provided the tinder for mass murder, it was unscrupulous politicians in both communities who provided the spark and stoked the fires of hatred between Hindus and Muslims. Today, 50 years after independence, it is still easy to stir those embers of hatred into open and blazing conflict.

More than a million men, women

and children died in the aftermath of partition in 1947, and it would have been far worse but for the courage of a few like Mahatma Gandhi who worked ceaselessly for communal harmony. It is helpful in understanding the India of today, that Gandhi was murdered by the RSS, a fascist grouping that idolises Hitler and is widely recognised as the ideological wing of today's ruling BJP.

The RSS and the BJP both derive their strength from a latent Hindu nationalism that has little to do with Hindu religious teachings and everything to do with a fascist view of other religions and other ways of life. As one BJP supporter commented on Radio 4's *Today Programme* last weekend, "we will tolerate minorities, providing they toe the line". Half a century earlier, Pandit Nehru, India's first prime minister, had declared that "the protection of minorities is more than a responsibility; it is a sacred trust".

The irony is that it was Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, who first betrayed that sacred trust. In early 1984, Congress were trailing in the opinion polls with an election less than a year away. There had been rioting in Bombay in which many Muslims had lost their lives and their homes. Visiting the area as prime minister, it was expected that Mrs Gandhi would give words of comfort to the Muslims. Instead, she declared, "majorities have their rights". She continued with this policy of pandering to majority prejudice by starting a vicious campaign of attack against India's tiny Sikh minority.

It worked in the short term, with Congress achieving a landslide victory in the 1984 election, but it's all been downhill since, both for Congress and India. The then tiny BJP quickly cashed in on growing majority communalism with the wanton destruction of the historic mosque at Ayodhya and the chilling promise of further destruction of minority places of worship.

Since its victory in the general election earlier this year the public image of the BJP has taken a battering in its attempts to balance the conflicting demands of fractious coalition partners. Hence the desire to impress on others that India with the BJP in charge is a mighty power, ready to use scarce resources in a destructive show of military might.

Writing in the *Times* this week, the former Director of the Lahore Atomic Energy Centre, Saeed A. Durani, predicts that Pakistan will respond in kind.

He cites Newton's Third Law, "to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction". He is probably right in his prediction. But the logical extension of this law means that a conciliatory gesture should also elicit a similar response. The challenge is for leaders on the sub-continent to look beyond power for people's sake to the real needs of the people so arrogantly ignored in the squandering of desperately needed resources in shallow displays of strength.

## BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

### BIRTHS

PRICE: On 10 May 1998 in Richard Newell Price and Vanessa Rankine, a son, Mark Richard Michael; a brother for Jessica.

### IN MEMORIAM

# Racal hits peak on high hopes of Telecom float

## MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

RACAL TELECOM, due to become the third spin-off from Racal Electronics, should enjoy a stock market valuation of £675m.

Stockbroker Henderson Crosthwaite believes Racal's shares are therefore worth around 450p. They rose 15.6p to 371.5p, a peak.

Sir Ernest Harrison, Racal's chairman, has already successfully hived off Vodafone and Chubb Security (now part of Williams) as standalone companies. His intention is to float 25 per cent of RT although the Vodafone formula is followed the group will eventually sever its link with its parent.

Henderson's telecom analyst Chris Godsmark, formerly business correspondent of *The Independent*, says Sir Ernest has built one of Britain's largest telephone services from a 1988 standing start. He believes Telecom Italia and Deutsche Telecom thought about buying RT

when Racal started to review its options last year.

At least one bid did materialise. Duncan Lewis, former chief of Granada's media division, got together a £450m offer but Sir Ernest said no and decided to follow the flotation path.

Racal's decision to pursue a flotation as the best way to maximise shareholder value has proved fortuitous, says Mr Godsmark. "In the six months since that decision share prices in the telecom sector have risen strongly on a combination of bid speculation and more optimistic predictions of the growth of data traffic."

RT's closest competitor, has climbed from 251p in the autumn to 379p, he points out.

Sir Ernest, who is 72, has been chairman of Racal, which has 26.6 per cent of National Lottery organiser Camelot, for 32 years.

As RT prepares for market, the struggling Iomica wireless

telephone group crashed 49p to 36p. It is seeking more cash and is looking for a strategic investor which could result in "significant dilution to existing shareholders". The shares were floated last summer at 390p, producing a £460m war-chest. They touched 421p.

Footsie turned on a mixed display, ending 20 points up at 5,955.6. Supporting indices were once again in rampant form. The mid cap surged 43.3 to a 5,897.8 peak; the small cap added 6.1 to a 2,788.4 high.

Among the mid caps Electrocomponents enjoyed a 34p gain to 584p with the help of vague takeover speculation.

Bus and train shares, such as Stagecoach and FirstGroup, were again given the green light as the market continued to draw encouragement from the coming Government White Paper on the transport industry. Stage-

coach advanced 72.5p to 1,367.5p and FirstGroup 17p to 443.5p. Railtrack gained 23.5p to 1,229.5p, a high.

Barclays, after meeting analysts, put on 26p to 1,069p; Halifax rose 33.5p to 842.5p.

Rolls-Royce was another to score from investment presentations. As its US roadshow

climbed 6p to 300p.

EMI, figures next week, fell 19.5p to 522.5p as Seagram, in effect, clinched the takeover of PolyGram, ending any lingering hopes of another strike at EMI.

Rentokil Initial, up 18.5p at 431.5p, was one of the Footsie leaders. Many await a strike for Compass, the contract caterer, up 42p to 1,269p.

Safeway, on continuing speculation about a break-up bid, rose 12.75p to 393p.

British Land, in association with Asda, remains the most likely predator.

Any deal would involve

Asda cherry picking around 60 Safeway stores. Such a manœuvre could overcome the Government's objection to an Asda/Safeway merger. As a sus-

pect that Somerfield could also enjoy pickings from Safeway's stores portfolio gave the shares a 12.5p lift to 374p.

Mirror,

the newspaper

group, rose a further 6.5p to 218p as the German Axel Springer Verlag group admit-

ted it may bid. The shares have climbed 21.5p this week.

Mits, the computer group elevated to Footsie this week, fell further 37p to 3,380p.

Newcomer ComputaCenter was another catching its breath, off 22.5p to 743.5p.

The Falkland Islands oil tiddlers had another gushing session although profit takers took their inevitable toll.

Desire touched 475p; it closed at 415p, up just 1p.

Greenwich Resources, after hitting 41p, ended 1.5p off at 36.5p. West-

mount, at one time around

275p, ended at 245p, up 10p.

Imperial Chemical Industries managed to resist an ABN Amro downgrading. The investment house described the shares as "overvalued". It expects profits of £531m this year, up from £518m.

Ladbrokes was another to shrug off uncomfortable de-

velopments - the likelihood that it will have to sell more than 100 betting shops. The shares were 2p off at 345p.

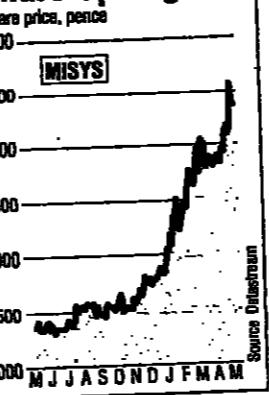
CERAMICS group John

Tams had a number of

bid approaches. The shares, up 3p to 25.5p, have edged up

from 17p last month.

## Share Spotlight



4000 MISYS 3500 3000 2500 2000 1500 1000 MJASONDJFMAM

## TAKING STOCK

GOWRINGS, with an unusual combination of Ford dealerships and Burger King fast food restaurants, should achieve profits of £1.7m this year and just over £2m next, believes stockbroker Greig Middleton. The shares, at 122.5p, "offer considerable potential", says analyst David Wilkinson. Guinness Peat, which once made bid noises, has 14.6 per cent but the founding family has more than 50 per cent.

BRITISH Taxpayers Association, the troubled group being developed as a go-go investment vehicle, has been given a tantalising new name - Bearbull Active Strategic Investment Co. The company is being revamped after what amounted to a rescue bid. The shares, traded on OTEX, rose 0.5p to 4p. They once nudged 30p.

CERAMICS group John Tams had a number of bid approaches. The shares, up 3p to 25.5p, have edged up from 17p last month.

## Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling unless otherwise stated. The yield is the basic twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earning (PE) ratio is the share price divided by the earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including exceptional.

Other symbols: E = dividend; S = suspended; P = partly paid up; N = new.

Source: Bloomberg

GI: Prices are Bloomberg Generic.

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## BA shrugs off American hitch

US Justice Department says link-up could mean higher fares

By Michael Harrison

THE LAUNCH of British Airways' alliance with American Airlines is facing the threat of yet further delay, possibly until next summer, following opposition to the link-up from the US Justice Department.

BA yesterday attempted to play down the significance of the Justice Department's intervention, saying: "This is just another step along the regulatory road."

However, the call for the alliance to be "significantly restructured" before it is allowed through could dash the two airlines' hopes of launching their long-delayed partnership this autumn.

The Justice Department said that as it stood the alliance would lead to significantly higher air fares across the Atlantic. It recommended that 336 take-off and landing slots - the equivalent of 24 round trips daily - be surrendered at Heathrow airport as a condition of approving the tie-up. It also called for the Dallas-London and Chicago-London routes operated by BA and AA to be excluded from the alliance.

BA stressed that responsibility for final approval of the alliance in the US rested not with the Justice Department but the Department of Transportation which it said would apply a broader



The Justice Department said that 336 take-off and landing slots at Heathrow should be surrendered as a condition of the tie-up

test of public interest. BA also said: "The Justice Department has made it clear that the slots don't have to come from BA/AA."

However, the US DoT is not expected to deliver its final verdict on the alliance before the end of the summer at the earliest, leaving the two carriers little time to begin co-ordinated services in time for the launch of the winter schedule.

BA shares slipped in early trading as news of the Justice Department's tough stance emerged but later recovered most of their lost ground.

Richard Hannah, transport analyst at Bankers Trust Alex. Brown, said: "We don't think this is a deal breaker at this stage. It is another major regulatory hurdle that has to be crossed."

The alliance has now been awaiting regulatory approval for two years and has yet to be formally cleared by the UK or the European Commission. The Office of Fair Trading recommended that the two airlines surrender 168 slots in return for approval. But in its initial ruling, the European Commission called for the surrender of up to 350 slots.

BA said: "Naturally, we expect the US DoT to consider not just the competition analysis but also the benefits

Karel Van Miert, the EU Competition Commissioner, is expected to announce his final ruling in mid-June. The indications are that Brussels is looking for the airlines to make 250-300 slots available.

The Justice Department also said that approval for the alliance should be contingent upon an open skies accord being agreed between the UK and the US, allowing more carriers to compete on transatlantic routes.

BA said: "Naturally, we expect the US DoT to consider not just the competition analysis but also the benefits

of an open skies agreement between the UK and the US and stronger competition between global alliances."

The deadline for filings to the US DoT passed yesterday. The Department now has a month to consider them before reaching an outline decision. BA can then make representations depending on the level of concessions being demanded.

City analysts warned there would come a point when the two airlines would walk away from any deal, thus scuppering any open skies accord and depriving other carriers of any slots.

## Consumers keep up spending spree

By Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

AS MANUFACTURING slid into recession in the first three months of this year, consumers increased their spending at the fastest pace since the late 1980s.

New figures for gross domestic product showed slightly higher growth than first estimated, but confirmed that the weakness of industry and exports is slowing the economy.

The signs of slowdown left a majority of City experts confident that the Bank of England will not have to raise the cost of borrowing again, despite the split between buoyant consumer spending and services on the one hand and sagging exports and manufacturing industry on the other. Rising pay claims are seen as the last possible source of danger on the interest rate front.

The upward revision yesterday to GDP growth, from 0.4 per cent to 0.5 per cent in the first quarter, and from 2.8 per

cent to 2.9 per cent year-on-year, was exactly as expected.

Details showed consumer spending still growing at an annual pace of 5.1 per cent, the highest since the end of 1988. Investment spending was strong too, up 5.5 per cent compared with a year earlier.

However, government spending fell slightly in real terms, while the widening gap between exports and imports lopped 1.8 percentage points off the overall growth rate. This was the result of the widest trade deficit, in constant pounds, since the middle of 1993.

"It is not clear whether the economy's landing will be soft or hard, in view of the two conflicting forces," said Kevin Dartington, an economist at ABN-Amro.

The industry breakdown showed that while manufacturing has officially moved into recession, services have started to slow too. The quarterly increase in their growth was, at

0.7 per cent, the lowest for a year and a half and revised down from the earlier figure of 0.8 per cent.

The City's doves were swift to pounce on this bit of the evidence. "It suggests a broad-based slowdown in activity," said Nick Vaughan of Barclays Capital.

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee gets its next chance to vote on interest rates in two weeks' time, and none of the figures due before then is expected to sway the vote in favour of an increase. The latest published minutes showed a 5-3 majority against an increase in April, and there was also no change earlier this month.

The arrival in June of John Vickers, the Bank's new chief economist and the final member to join the MPC, alters the arithmetic slightly. Professor Vickers, an Oxford academic, is an unknown quantity but is expected to be a dove because of his expertise on industry.

By Andrew Yates

ZENECA yesterday unveiled a succession plan which will see Dr Tom McKillop, the 55-year-old head of the group's drugs division, succeed Sir David Barnes as the chief executive of the pharmaceutical giant.

Sir David is to become non-executive chairman of Zeneca from next May, replacing Sir Sydney Lipsmith who is stepping down.

The move ends months of speculation that Zeneca could appoint an outsider to replace Sir David. The decision to seek an internal appointment was interpreted in the City as meaning that Zeneca would remain determined to hang on to its independence despite the trend towards consolidation in the drugs sector.

Sir David, 62, has lead Zeneca with distinction ever since it was hived off from ICI in 1993, presiding over a four-fold increase in its share price. A Zeneca spokesman said:

City One analyst said: "This is an uninspiring move and means nothing has changed at Zeneca. Sooner or later it needs to do a merger. [Dr] McKillop has been criticised for lacking vision and concentrating on growing existing products rather than looking for new ones."

Other analysts questioned whether Sir David could resist the temptation to interfere with Dr McKillop's new responsibilities after his long tenure at the head of Zeneca. But the group yesterday insisted the two executives would have clearly defined roles.

Meanwhile at its annual general meeting Zeneca warned that the strong pound would cost the group £10m this year, £20m more than it forecast in March at its annual results meeting. Zeneca also cautioned that poor spring weather in Europe has meant the group's agrochemical business had got off to a slow start.

The statement caused Zeneca's shares to slip 10p to 2530p.

Springer to show its hand. An official denial of interest would have barred Springer, which is run by Gus Fischer, a former chief executive of Rupert Murdoch's News International, from mounting a bid for a year.

However, Springer's statement stressed that it had not made an offer and was not "in a position to know whether it would make an offer".

Analysts said the group would have to bid at least 255p a share for Mirror Group to have any chance of taking control.

By Andrew Yates

a spokesperson said there was "absolutely nothing" in the rumours and denied that the German group had any interest in Mirror Group.

City sources believe that the Takeover Panel, prompted by

Springer to show its hand. An official denial of interest would have barred Springer, which is run by Gus Fischer, a former chief executive of Rupert Murdoch's News International, from mounting a bid for a year.

However, Springer's statement stressed that it had not made an offer and was not "in a position to know whether it would make an offer".

Analysts said the group would have to bid at least 255p a share for Mirror Group to have any chance of taking control.

## German media group declares interest in the Mirror

By Peter Thal Larsen

TAKOVER speculation was last night swirling around Mirror Group after a German group said was considering opportunities "which might or might not lead to an offer" for

David Montgomery's newspaper empire.

Axel Springer, a German newspaper publisher whose interests include the popular newspaper *Bild* and the heavyweight daily *Die Welt*, was last night forced to issue a statement

after persistent speculation in the City linking it with Mirror Group.

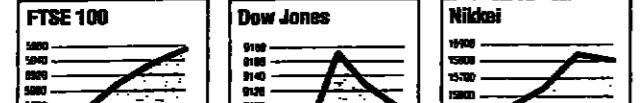
The group issued the statement last night to clarify an earlier comment made by a spokesperson in response to the speculation. Earlier in the day,

Springer to show its hand. An official denial of interest would have barred Springer, which is run by Gus Fischer, a former chief executive of Rupert Murdoch's News International, from mounting a bid for a year.

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## STOCK MARKETS



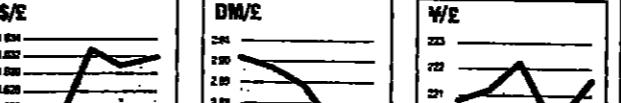
Index	Class	Change	Change (%)	S2 w/ high	S2 w/ low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100		20.00	0.34	6150.50	4382.80	3.53
FTSE 250		43.30	0.74	5681.70	4384.20	3.57
FTSE 350		11.90	0.41	2938.70	2141.80	3.38
FTSE All Share		11.33	0.40	2861.12	2106.59	3.35
FTSE SmallCap		6.10	0.22	2782.60	2182.10	2.88
FTSE MidCap		7.40	0.49	1501.10	1225.20	3.00
FTSE AIM		1133.00	4.20	0.37	1128.80	965.80
FTSE EURO 100		1034.19	—	—	—	1.05
Dow Jones		25.14	—	5291.51	6071.32	1.58
Nikkei		1501.65	—	2031.07	14468.21	0.97
Rand Sanq		9553.95	-114.47	-1.18	18520.31	7909.13
Dax		5564.21	63.23	0.97	5512.06	3487.24

## INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates	3 months	1 year	1 yr chg	Bond Yields	1 yr chg	Long bond	1 yr chg	
UK	7.54	1.04	7.54	0.65	5.82	-1.38	5.76	-1.57
US	5.69	-0.11	5.91	-0.31	5.64	-1.10	5.91	-1.08
Japan	0.55	-0.03	0.58	-0.29	1.52	-1.26	2.10	-1.23
Germany	3.62	0.45	3.92	0.55	4.92	-0.99	5.50	-1.18

## CURRENCIES



Yen	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago	Dollar	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	14.19	-0.17	19.98	SDP	114.70	2.90	111.47
Gold (\$)	300.15	-1.10	342.80	RPI	162.80	4.00	158.35
Silver (\$)	5.31	-0.03	4.65	Base Rates	7.25	6.25	—
London Pounds	361.50	-12	3487.24				

www.bloomberg.com/uk

source: Bloomberg

## Shares hit as Ionica seeks rescuer

By Michael Harrison

INDICA, the troubled wireless telephone operator, stunned the City again yesterday by announcing that it is seeking an outside investor to rescue it from its financial troubles.

The news sparked a further collapse in Ionica shares which plunged by more than a half to close at 36p valuing the group at just £61m. It was floated last summer at a value of £625m.

Ionica said that the rescue deal could result in control of the company changing hands or "significant dilution" for existing shareholders.

The search for a strategic investor follows the failure of Ionica to renegotiate the terms of a £300m bank loan. It has been in breach of the credit facility since last year after it failed to trouble roll out its nationwide telephone network based on wireless technology known as fixed radio access.

Ionica said that it had been advised to seek further equity finance before attempting to raise new debt finance. It has cash of £90m to continue rolling out the network of base stations but needs to put longer term funding facilities in place before the end of the year.

Sir James McKinnon, Ionica's chairman, said: "We believe that value for our shareholders is best promoted by resolving our funding issues as soon as possible." He added that it hoped



**JEREMY WARNER**  
ON WHAT THE  
FUTURE MIGHT  
HOLD FOR THE  
STRUGGLING  
SUPERMARKET  
CHAIN

## Safeway may be heading for the checkout

IS SAFEWAY heading for an ignominious demise, its portfolio of stores broken up and parcelled off to its rivals, or can it hope to survive and prosper independently once more? The City rumour mill has been working overtime all this month. Consolidation of the supermarket sector didn't end with the recent merger of Somerfield and Kwik Save, it says. Somehow or other, the number four in the sector, Safeway, is also going to get carved up or taken over.

Safeway's chairman, David Webster, has found it impossible to put the lid on the whirlwind of speculation. Publicly he insists there's nothing in it, that Safeway has a clear independent strategy for the future. Privately he must be painfully aware of the bind Safeway finds itself in.

To be number four in any market is almost always a deeply uncomfortable position; in supermarkets, a mature and cut-throat business if ever there was one, it is doubly so.

With little room left for expansion in sales of groceries, and planning permissions for new supermarkets in short supply, the main players have no option but to attack each other in their search for growth. As the smallest and most vulnerable of the top four, Safeway is bound to get progressively squeezed in this game of robbing Peter to pay Paul. This would be the case even if there hadn't been some basic errors at Saf-

eway in supply and systems. These have made matters much worse, allowing the company to be trounced in the pecking order by the once beleaguered Asda.

Safeway claims it is now on top of these problems, but just look at it this way. Its sales per square foot are significantly lower than those of Sainsbury and Tesco. In theory, this should give substantial scope for growth; if Safeway could get anywhere near the customer traffic of the other two, its profits would rise exponentially.

The trouble is, this just isn't going to happen. In this business, anyone with relatively low sales per square foot either has to stock goods for longer than its competitors, inevitably leading to bigger stock write-offs than others incur, or has to have much better just-in-time delivery systems. Again, the cost of providing this puts you at a competitive disadvantage. An average Safeway store does not have as big a selection of produce as a Tesco, and that's because, without very heavy investment, it cannot afford to. And so on and so forth.

Make no mistake about it, Safeway is financially healthy and continues to make good profits. It is not like Kwik Save, which was slipping into the sea before it merged with Somerfield. Even so, the City is convinced Safeway is set on a path of long, slow decline. In the absence of bid bops, there would be little support for the shares.

So what's going to happen? Even if top executives could agree on a division of top posts, a straight merger with Asda or either of the big two would almost certainly be barred by the competition authorities.

But since when did the Office of Fair Trading get in between an investment banker and his fee? There are plenty of ways to skin a cat. Certainly the City is busy dreaming up plans. Since the collapse last September of merger talks between Safeway and Asda, there have been talks between Asda and Sainsbury about a joint bid. This would have seen the two divide up Safeway's stores in a way which would avoid the kind of local monopoly problem that would occur if one or other subsumed Safeway in its entirety. These talks too have been foundered some little while back.

So what about plan C? This would have a property company make the bid and then sell off the stores piecemeal; 40 to Asda, 60 to Sainsbury, 30 to Somerfield, and so on. The man City insiders believe daring and ambitious enough to attempt this would be John Rribal of British Land. He knows as much as there is to know about the buying, selling and renting of retail property. He recently signed a near £1bn sale and leaseback transaction with Great Universal Stores. But could he pull off such an audacious plan?

I want to stress again that Safeway is not

in any way sick. Indeed there are definite signs of a slight spring in the stock right now. But by the same token there appears to be no big idea, nothing that distinguishes and differentiates it from its main competitors, and in these circumstances it is hard to see how the company can adequately challenge the competitive pressures described earlier. So once again, what's the end game?

I've got a special interest in this question because I feel that somehow I was in at the start of this enterprise. One of my first jobs as a financial journalist was to go to a results presentation for Alpine double glazing. I don't know what became of that company, but at the time it was part of the galaxy of businesses and investments that surrounded Jimmy Gulliver and his associates, of whom the most important were Alastair Grant, David Webster and their ever-faithful investment banking house, Angus Grossart. Set against some of the fussy old types who ran British publicly quoted companies in those days, they were like a breath of fresh air – switched on, accessible and with a can-do mentality that made you know they were going places.

Their other big interest was Argyll (named after Mr Gulliver's county of birth), which they were building through a hectic series of takeovers into a substantial company. Within five years, Argyll had established enough of a presence and in-

vestment following to be able to mount a £2.3bn bid for Distillers. I still recall the circular with which they launched their assault. It was a vicious, utterly damning and unforgiving attack on the management record and performance of this sprawling scotch whisky combine. It destroyed John Connell, Distillers' gentlemanly chairman. He said of it: "Maybe I was naive, I didn't realise people would ever say things like that about their rivals in public."

In the end, Argyll was cheated out of the Distillers bid prize by Ernest Saunders at Guinness. Jimmy Gulliver was among the many casualties of that great takeover battle. His colleagues held him partially responsible, I think probably unfairly, for the failure of their bid and after a suitable period he was required to leave the group. Alastair Grant and David Webster turned their attention instead to the acquisition of the British end of Safeway from its American parent. Until Asda overtook them a few years back, the City had only praise for the way they handled this business. Such are the vicissitudes of corporate life. With the vultures now hovering, David Webster and his team find themselves in a boat not dissimilar to John Connell and his golfing partners at Distillers in the mid 1980s. I'd like to believe Safeway has a cracking future ahead of it, but whatever happens, it seems unlikely it will be under this management.

### IN BRIEF

#### Price controls abolished on water for industry

PRICE controls are to be removed on water charges for large industrial consumers, the industry regulator Ian Byatt announced yesterday. This means that water companies will not be able to offset lower bills for big users by raising charges for domestic consumers. Mr Byatt also said that price reviews would take place automatically every five years.

#### Outsider to run Vaux

VAUX, the North Eastern brewer and hotel group, yesterday appointed Martin Grant, the head of Allied Domecq's leisure business, as its new chief executive to replace Sir Paul Nicholson. The appointment of an outsider marks an end to the Nicholson family dynasty which has controlled the group since it was founded. Sir Paul will become non-executive chairman of the group. Mr Grant is responsible for developing brands such as Big Steak pub, Wacky Warehouses and Frixion.

#### St Ives buys rival for £33m

ST IVES, the printing and direct mail company, has bought one of its rivals, Hunters Armley, for £33m. The agreed takeover was supported by 43 per cent of Hunters shareholders. At a price of 125p a share, the takeover values Hunters at a 39 per cent premium to its closing price on Thursday.

#### Daiwa HQ comes to London

DAIWA Securities, the Japanese brokerage, is to transfer its international operations headquarters from Tokyo to London. The firm is also to open an office in London to look after its offshore operations.

#### Financial services lag behind

FINANCIAL services companies are failing to respond to changes in technology, according to a report published yesterday. An *Economist* Intelligence Unit/Andersen Consulting survey found that financial institutions were "only slowly adapting to a virtual world". Robert Baldock, a partner in Andersen Consulting, said: "This lack of urgency increasingly exposes financial institutions to new entrants".

#### Dragon Oil chief sells up

ARIFIN Panigoro, chairman of Dragon Oil is set to sell his 46 per cent stake in the oil exploration and production company. Dragon, which has \$242m (£151m) in shareholders funds and \$72m in net assets, is focused on the Caspian Sea, where it claims to have reserves of 187 million barrels of oil. Mr Panigoro said he had "every confidence" in the assets and management of Dragon. He said he wanted to focus his efforts on opportunities in Indonesia.

#### UN ambassador to join BT

BRITAIN'S ambassador to the United Nations is to become the head of British Telecom when he retires in June. Sir John Weston, the UK's permanent representative on the UN Security Council in New York, will join as a non-executive director after three years in the post. He was previously Britain's ambassador to Nato.

#### COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Monmouthshire (F)	14.85m (10.89m)	-28.15m (-18.48m)	38.7p (-33.8p)	- (F)
Orkney (F)	65.75m (62.27m)	11.2m (10.59m)	15.25p (15.47p)	5.85p (4.98p)
Connacht (F)	76.85m (77.98m)	2.98m (3.406m)	3.61p (2.29p)	2.25p (2.15p)
Connacht Poly (F)	65.85m (61.50m)	14.1m (12.0m)	44.25p (35.69p)	20.0p (18.0p)
Monmouthshire (F)	10.85m (9.49m)	-3.72m (1.85m)	-27.92p (3.82p)	10 (F)
James Smith (F)	11.07m (9.38m)	2.82m (4.022m)	7.7p (11.2p)	0.25p (0.08p)
Monkton Group (F)	7.77m (5.44m)	0.407m (0.257m)	1.71p (1.01p)	0.2p (0.5p)
Monkton Solutions (F)	- (F)	0.174m (0.94m)	0.35p (0.25p)	- (F)
Monkton Group (F)	2.23m (3.83m)	0.19m (0.171m)	0.3p (1.08p)	10 (F)

After Seagram's purchase of PolyGram, Peter Thal Larsen asks if the independents have any future

## There will always be life under the stars

JUDGED by the events of the past few weeks, the world music industry is becoming a global business, dominated by an ever shrinking number of increasingly large players.

After weeks of frenzied speculation Seagram yesterday announced that it was buying PolyGram, the record and film arm of Philips, for \$10.6bn (£6.3bn). And most analysts now agree that EMI, the UK group which had been close to a deal with Seagram before negotiations broke down, cannot hold on to its independence for much longer.

Nevertheless, this is not the whole picture. For even as music companies become larger, smaller independent labels appear to be thriving.

True, PolyGram can boast big names such as U2 and Sheryl Crow, while EMI has contracts with acts like the Spice Girls. But not all big names are owned by big labels. Oasis, which is arguably the world's most successful rock group of the past few years, is signed up to the ultra-hip, but tiny, Creation Records. The Prodigy has also stuck with XL Recordings, part of the independent Beggar's Banquet label.

In an industry where size is apparently everything, how can the smaller labels survive? The answer lies in the uncertain nature of the music industry. The cost of discovering, developing and promoting a new band can run into millions of pounds with no guarantee of success – a risk the major groups with their focus on the bottom line, are increasingly reluctant to take. So instead they let smaller, more nimble groups do the hard work for them.

"The major labels have

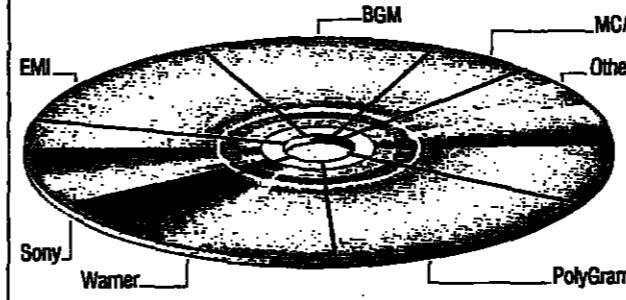


Acts such as U2 and Elton John, above, make big money for big companies. Yet All Saints, right, are on an independent label

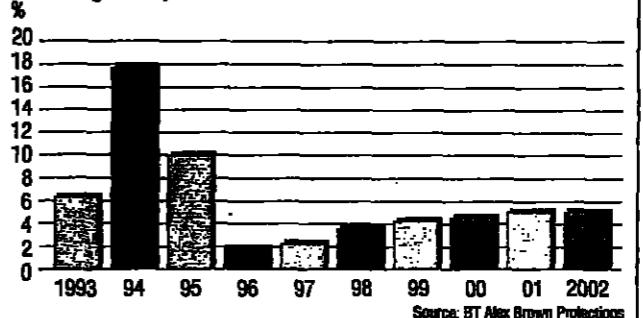


#### The ups and downs of the music industry

Who owns the music?



Market growth, %



parts of the world where music sales were still growing, has added to these pressures.

On top of this, music groups are facing an increasing threat from the Internet. Internet music retailers such as Music Boulevard are now selling CDs for as little as \$12 – a large discount to retail prices in Europe. As Nick Ward, an analyst at Credit Lyonnais Laing, points out, this will eventually force music groups to cut prices and squeeze margins.

All this means that large music groups need to be sure of success when they promote a band. Industry executives admit that the cost of promoting new bands means that their first album rarely makes money. The trick is to pick acts that will continue to be popular, there-

by picking up lucrative profits on their second and third releases.

This is a complete change of fortune for the independent labels, many of which were swallowed up in a welter of consolidation in the late 1980s. That's when Island, the label which nurtured bands like U2, was taken over by PolyGram while Richard Branson sold his Virgin record label to EMI.

So the major and independent labels seem to be made for each other. "The beauty is that we are seen as a place where bands can develop at their own pace," says Andy Saunders, head of communications at Creation. "Bands can work with a small team but then be marketed by a huge organisation."

However, the relationship is

not free of tension. Large groups will regularly find themselves competing with smaller labels to sign acts. Sometimes the rivalry even extends to groups that normally work together.

What's more, the majors have to handle their relationship with smaller labels carefully. Sony recently tried to exercise an option it held to take full control of Creation. But when its founders made it clear they did not want to be part of a huge music conglomerate, Sony was forced to back down.

Still, the growing consolidation between the largest music groups could turn out to be good news for smaller labels. "The merger between Seagram and PolyGram may look bad news for the independent

sector," says Ajax Scott, editor of *Music Business International*, the industry bible. "But increased competition between the majors means they will invest more safely, leaving a niche for the independents."

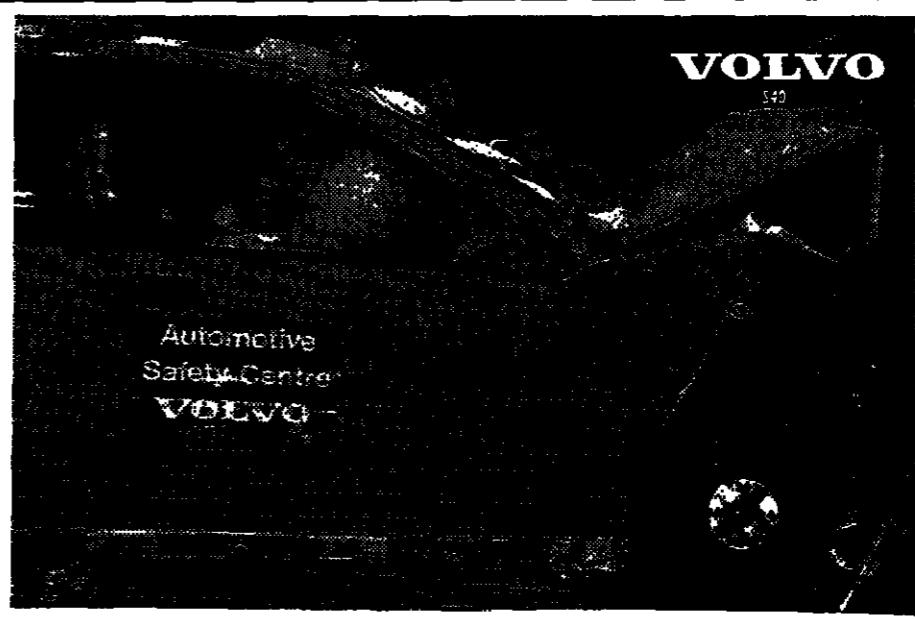
Not all industry observers accept the status quo, however. Having already made one fortune setting up and selling a record label, Richard Branson recently set up another, calling it V2. His aim is to create a global music player from scratch, investing in offices and distribution facilities around the world. Observers are not yet sure whether his gamble will pay off. "They've had some success," says one industry insider. "But they have probably only got another two years to justify that level of investment."

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# Rich pickings for the new millionaires

It's been an amazing month for wealth creation. Britain's new entrepreneurs are having a ball. By Nigel Cope

WHAT a month it has been for the new entrants into Britain's millionaires' club. Thanks to a decision to sell or float their business on the stock market, the founders of a computer software group and an internet services company are now sitting on a paper fortune. They are not alone - in the last four weeks alone, seven entrepreneurs have made a combined £1bn.

These are some of Britain's new millionaires. Often quite young, aged in their 30s or 40s, they have typically made their fortunes in new, fast-growing industries. And there has been a sudden rush of them.

Mike Norris, 36, who runs the Computacenter PC supplies business, is now worth more than £12m following the company's £1.3m flotation last week. The two founders, Philip Hulme and Peter Odgen, are worth a staggering £34m and have so much money to spare that they are giving away £50m to charity.

Cliff Stanford, has made £33m from selling his Demon Internet business and is now setting up a fund to help young entrepreneurial hopefuls.

Tom McCabe, founder of the Swiftcall phone company, is set to net £100m if it's deal to sell the business to a Japanese company goes through.

Tom Singh will find his stake in the New Look fashion chain he founded worth more than £120m when it floats on the stock market next month. And so the list goes on.

The array of talent paints an interesting picture of entrepreneurial Britain. The first point is that Britain's businessmen and women seem to be more dynamic. Rob Johnson, an American who lectures in entrepreneurship at London Business School says he feels the UK is now catching up with the go-getting, "can do" busi-

ness culture of the United States. "There is a change in the business culture. People are more willing to take risks. We are getting more and more role models like these new millionaires and people start to think 'well if they can do it, I might have a go.' Success breeds success."

It is a point backed up by Cliff Stanford of Demon Internet. Mr Stanford is one of a growing number of "serial entrepreneurs" the country is now producing. In pubs alone there are three. Michael Cannon built up the Devonish pubs chain, sold it and then developed the Magic Pub company before selling that too. David Bruce founded the Firkin bar and breweries and is now setting up bars in France. Hugh Corbett is opening pubs in London again after selling his first chain.

There remains much to be done here, though. Some economic commentators point out that Britain's economy still lacks the large layer of medium-sized companies which exist in Germany. They say many sell out rather than seeking outside investment to develop their businesses. A look at our list shows some common themes. Many of the new millionaires have made their fortunes in fast growing high technology sectors such as telecommunications and computers. There isn't a single engineer or industrialist in the list.

It is a trend underlined in the recent independent 100 list of Britain's fastest growing privately owned companies. The top places were dominated by service sectors: enterprises computer software businesses or recruitment consultants which are benefiting from the trend towards the contracting out of non-core services.

As Nigel Crookford, a partner at accountants Price Wa-

terhouse in Nottingham, says: "These kind of businesses are very attractive to the stock market at the moment and they are fetching some very high ratings." For example when Computacenter, the PC supplier floated this week, its offer of shares was swamped by investors. It could have been subscribed 10 times over. Ac-

## The dash for cash: Seven entrepreneurs who have struck it rich in the past month

<b>Business</b>	<b>Cliff Stanford</b> Demon Internet	<b>Mike Norris</b> Computacenter	<b>Tom Singh</b> New Look	<b>Mogens Tholstrup</b> Daphne's restaurant	<b>Terry Liddiard</b> British Regional Airlines	<b>Bridget Blow</b> ITNet	<b>Tom McCabe</b> Swiftcall
<b>Background</b>	Owner of Britain's largest supplier of internet services which has ridden the computer nerd wave. It is Bigbly's answer to how US companies like Netscape and the mighty Microsoft.	British's leading distributor of personal computers.	Fast growing cheap and cheerful fashion chain which buys to buy a shirt for a t-shirt. Operates a 'swap it in, swap it out' policy by getting new stock in every week to keep the punters interested.	Restaurant to the Kensington smart set and various 'it' girls like Tara Palmer-Tomkinson and other "micro-celebs". Controls three restaurants-Daphne's, Pasta and The Collection.	Operates 86 routes under the Manx Airline name and has links with BA. Liddiard's company is set to expand with a fleet of new jets.	The former information-technology division of Cadbury Schweppes. A supplier of IT systems it has benefited from Microsoft buy-outs.	Owner of the first mobile phone company to make more revenue than the BT.
<b>How they started</b>	Born in Essex, Stanford has always had numbers. Learned book-keeping from his mother at the age of 10 and was running pay-rolls by 15. Predictably he became an accountant.	A dyslexic Essex boy who failed his English O Level several times but was gifted at maths. Joined Computacenter as a junior salesman in 14. Rose through the ranks to become chief executive. Aged 36.	The business was founded by Philip Holden and Peter Odgen who rode the PC wave as companies started replacing their mainframe computers. But Mike Norris is CEO and it seems to be the key to future growth.	Borrowed £5,000 to open his first shop in Sutton in 1989. Now has 444 shops and sales of more than £500m. Floating on the stock market next month with a value of £250m.	Opened East restaurant in London's Soho in 1991 after giving up on being a designer. Then bought Daphne's, a former favourite with Hollywood types in the 1960s.	Joined as a founder director when the business was re-launched in 1992. Started with just three people including a Pilkington 727 on loan from a London museum.	Started Swiftcall in 1992 serving 25,000 customers and has now sold 2.5m pre-paid telephone cards which offer users telephone calls at up to half the postbox rate.
<b>What they're worth</b>	Has just bagged £33m from selling out to Scottish Telecom. He turned down a higher offer from a foreign buyer because he wanted Demon to stay British.	A dyslexic who has followed the PC wave as companies started replacing their mainframe computers. But Mike Norris is CEO and it seems to be the key to future growth.	Holdings is one of the oldest Asians in Britain. Owns nearly a third of the business within the country, notably in London. It is worth £170m. Has paid himself £10m in salary and bonuses over the last five years.	Sold out for £5.5m last week to Bago, a restaurant chain run by another colourist entrepreneur, Colin Johnson.	Should be £7m richer when the company floats next month.	Should make a paper profit of up to £12m from the company's forthcoming stock market listing.	Is said to be about to pocket £100m from selling the company to the Japanese.
<b>Lifestyle</b>	Thought his route to "Good is Good" was to turn to a second-hand bookshop. But he has turned himself into a Seab convertible and a flat in London's Docklands.	Gradually adapts to these super-computer environments as a Foreigner and a lot in London's Docklands.	On tour with a business and going to the States. Also goes on psychos-analysis. Does visit four analysts at once because he has been thinking too "analytically".	Life is one big party for the decking Dave. Has been linked with a long line of Hello-type young women including Ms Palmer-Tomkinson, Tania Bryer and Lady Victoria Harvey.	Lots of travelling at reasonable rates.	Private individual. Doesn't much like being referred to as a "new millionaire".	Comfortable and gentle money at the time.
<b>Management Style</b>	Inclusive. Many of Demon's 520 staff will also be receiving dividends from share options.	Dynamic. Follows the Eddie Shah model: "Dinner at home is a missed sales opportunity."	Driven but not autocratic. Apparently fond of New Look staff who see him as their "spiritual leader".	Marketing and PR, then more PR and more PR. Once compiled a list of the 500 most important people in London to launch a restaurant.	No nonsense, like his talking.	Inclusive. Some 1,230 ITNet workers also owns shares.	Good to work with. But don't let it bind them too much. He's been it too many times before.
<b>What People Say About Them</b>	"I wish I'd thought of it," is probably a regular refrain.	"You get the impression Mike is very much a salesman but he's very bright," says a Venture capital backer.	Some criticism in the City about abandoning its float four years ago. Then there is the rather unsavory side of it. "Mike has rarely made money out of Indian businesses," one stockbroker says.	Sir Michael Balfour Chairman of British Midland Airlines recently went bankrupt. He currently owns 50% of BA, so is making even more money from the float than Liddiard.	Not much. Yet to achieve a high profile and probably doesn't want to.	Sir Michael Balfour Chairman of British Midland Airlines recently went bankrupt. He currently owns 50% of BA, so is making even more money from the float than Liddiard.	A nice man. A very, very nice man. But then with £100m their world say that wouldn't say?

terhouse in Nottingham, says: "These kind of businesses are very attractive to the stock market at the moment and they are fetching some very high ratings." For example when Computacenter, the PC supplier floated this week, its offer of shares was swamped by investors. It could have been subscribed 10 times over. Ac-

cording to David Wilkinson, national head of entrepreneurial services at the accountants Ernst & Young, the surge in the number of deals is due to the stock market's long-running "bull market" which has now lasted for several years.

"With the stock market at these kind of levels companies are looking at it and saying 'if

we go now we can get a very good price. If we wait, things could change. There is a lot of talk about potential recession at the moment and that could affect sentiment. So if I had a small restaurant chain at the moment with a bit of a brand name, this would be a very good time to sell."

Fear that the market may

change could be one factor behind the rush of deals, but so could the threat of higher taxes. Mr Wilkinson says the Labour Government could "get tough" on capital gains tax for entrepreneurs selling their businesses. "There has been a sigh of relief from the entrepreneurial community so far because Labour has not yet launched any sort of crack-down. But that could change."

People used to say that the difference between a Briton and an American is that while an American dreams of making a million, a British person dreams of winning it. But if Mr Stanford, the founder of Demon Internet, is anything to go by, attitudes may have changed.

"I like having money in my pocket. But it would be no fun to win it on the football pools. The thrill for me is to make it through business deals."

Perhaps it is significant that most of our new millionaires do not plan to jack it all in, they have made their millions. Most of them plan to continue working in their businesses.

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هذا من الأصل



# TIME OFF

TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT

Saturday 23 May 1998



PICTURE OF THE WEEK Opera-goers in reflective mood enjoying the garden on the first evening of Glyndebourne's opera season. Photograph by John Voos. To order a print of this picture (12x9in) call 0171-293 2534

## TRAVEL

Marcel Pagnol's  
Provence: 3  
Kazakhstan to China  
by rail: 4  
Cairo: 5,000 years in  
one weekend: 9

## LEISURE

Gardens to visit:  
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of Wollerton Old  
Hall: 10/11  
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crossword: 13

## SPORT

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Henman and Greg  
Rusedski look ahead to  
next week's French  
Open: 15

Back in the fold:  
Darren Anderton  
prepares for his return  
to the England football  
team: 24

Broken hearts. Robbery. Murder.  
(And you were looking forward to a quiet bank holiday?)

THE AFTERNOON PLAY, "The Greengage Summer", Rumer Godden's coming-of-age tale set in France before World War II. Joss falls for the charming Eliot but he ends up stealing more than her heart. Bank holiday Monday afternoon, 2.15 - 3.45.

BBC RADIO 4

92-95 FM & 198 LW

YOU'LL SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY.

Dylan Thomas waxes lyrical over the air waves. Swansea celebrates its prodigal son with a festival this July and August



## Poet's corner

Every summer Swansea revels in the rhythms and rhymes of Dylan Thomas. This year there's a special festival, writes Patrick Ellis

Swansea sees the return of Dylan Thomas once again this summer. Between 24 July and 24 August the first Dylan Thomas Festival to be run by the city will be held in the newly dedicated Dylan Thomas Centre. The event will culminate in a four-day international conference on "Dylan Thomas and his Contexts", held in association with University of Wales Swansea. It is open to academics and non-academics alike. The bonus for committed fans of Thomas is the possibility of staying in what remains of the old Swansea Grammar School, where the poet edited the school magazine.

The young Thomas would certainly recognise the festival venue that has recently been dedicated to his memory. Set squarely in the centre of what was then Swansea's commercial hub, the Municipal Offices and House of Correction with their elegant arched windows and columns of honey-coloured granite were built in 1829. Since being replaced by the Guildhall farther to the west in the Thirties, the building has seen some changes. For many years it served as a college of further education before sliding into disuse and dereliction in the early Eighties. After being rescued and renovated it was reopened in 1995 to host the International Year of Writing and Literature. Currently the centre houses the Dylan Thomas exhibition, "I, in my intricate image", as well as promoting varied and lively poetry, theatre and musical events throughout the year.

Thomas, who was born in 1914 in Cwmdonkin

Drive, would have known every hiding place and climbable tree in nearby Cwmdonkin Park where Swansea's pride in its famous, if somewhat prodigal, son is further marked by a garden dedicated to his memory. From the top of the park the views over the broad sweep of Swansea Bay would still be familiar to him. The twin islands of Mumbles Head, reputedly taking their name from *mumbus*, the Latin word for breasts, were to call him westwards, away from the safety of his childhood home to the beautiful Gower Peninsula, to West Wales and ultimately to America.

And in true vagabond poet fashion, Thomas answered that call – first on his own and then with his wife and family. But however restless his spirit, he still seemed unable to cut his links with the quiet, coastal Welsh town of his youth.

The accommodating peace of Newquay, where the A486 finally comes to rest beside the waters of Cardigan Bay, held him for a while. Though it thrived in the 18th and 19th centuries as a ship-building town, Newquay has long taken its foot off the gas. Shipbuilding has been replaced by fishing and tourism and, more recently, the town has been promoting its Atlantic bottlenose dolphin population, which can often be seen in the bay. Between 1944 and 1945 the Thomas family rented the bungalow Majoda from a local doctor. This was a productive period for Thomas. While he was here he wrote the heart-breakingly

beautiful "Fern Hill", in memory of childhood holidays at his aunt's Fernhill Farm near Carmarthen.

They didn't stay at Newquay very long. Allegedly one night the bungalow was visited by a military man recently returned from active service, who was armed with a machine gun and a hand grenade. He had apparently drunk a considerable amount of alcohol and was concerned about the close ties that his wife seemed to have formed with the poet. The soldier fired into the ceiling, but Thomas coolly managed to persuade him to hand over his weapons. At the ensuing court case a lenient view of the soldier's actions prevailed. He got off. By this time the Thomas family had moved.

With its usually uninhabited tranquillity it has been suggested that Newquay was the model for Llaregby, the fictional coastal setting for *Under Milk Wood*. Llaregby, whose spelling was slightly modified to disguise Thomas's little joke (the reversal of the phrase "bugger all") probably draws on many of the towns and villages he knew – places such as Ferryside, Fishguard, Mumbles and of course, Laugharne where, according to his friend Vernon Watkins, he spent some of the happiest days of his life.

Almost feminine in its gentle undulations, Laugharne today seems to be pervaded with a soft permanence in its slow streets as the town declines along the shore where Corran Brook meets the River Taf. Laugharne Castle still dominates the place. It was originally built as a Norman defence of the mouth of the river.

In today's somewhat calmer political climate it is maintained at public expense and defended by a charming and informative ticket lady who collects the £2 entry charge. The money is well spent. The views from the castle tower over the flat estuary leading into Carmarthen Bay can't have altered much since the days when Thomas used the gazebo built into the east wall to compile the short stories that were to become *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog*.

Whether it was the proximity to the sea, the quiet maturity of the town or just the absence of gun-toting husbands is open to debate but Thomas certainly felt comfortable here. And here he chose to live: His last home, the Boat House, perched on the edge of town, almost overhangs the estuary. From his writing den in the cycle shed, he could gaze out over the water searching for inspiration; or, alternatively, he could sneak off up to the pub. After Thomas died in New York in 1953, his body was brought home. It is buried in St Martin's Church in the town, with a simple white wooden cross marking the grave.

Back in Swansea, the spirit of Thomas lives on at the Dylan Thomas Theatre, home of Swansea Little Theatre, of which the young Dylan was a member. In the nearby maritime quarter his statue half rises from its seat. As he gazes over the Maritime Museum's collection of boats and the private yachts moored in the old dock basin, is the poet musing for the bar, or has he been inspired to write one last poem?

## I know a bank where the wild thyme blows ...

Today, the search for possible contenders for Shakespeare's wood in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is hindered by the fact that Athens is definitely not a green city. The view from the top of the Acropolis is one of a sprawling white metropolis in every direction, though 50 years ago the city was a great deal smaller, and woods would have been seen on the horizon.

The ancient Athenians used the word *polis* to describe the city of Athens. However, they also sometimes used *pola* to refer to the rocky outcrop of the acropolis, the sacred heart of the city. In ancient times the *pola* of Athens was not easily defined and there was an ongoing debate among the intellectual élite as to the outer limits of the city.

Philosophers argued over whether the Acropolis walls or the long walls built under Themistocles marked the city's boundaries, and the farming inhabitants of the demes who lived many miles from the Acropolis argued that they too were included in the city. It is possible, therefore, that Shakespeare's wood could be "near Athens" in the sense of near to the Acropolis and the Agora, the ancient sacred and political centres of the city.

These days, the only surviving green areas near to these classical ruins are the National and Zappeion gar-

Cheap flights to Athens mean that a month from now you could go in search of the 'wood near Athens' where the action in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* takes place. Moira O'Neill investigates

dens which boast subtropical trees, peacocks, waterfalls, ornamental ponds and a botanical museum. However, these gardens did not exist in Shakespeare's day; they were created only during the last century.

But you will find greenery, lots of it, if you go to the north-east suburban limit of Athens to Lykabettos, the highest of the hills of the city. It still has wooded slopes where visitors can walk in the shade, but is now a green island in a sea of houses.

Travelling in the same direction 14km further north east of Athens you'll find Kifissia, an attractive and popular "garden city" on the south-west slopes of Mt Pentelikon. The shade of its pine trees offers a welcome relief from the glare of Athens. A few miles further north of Kifissia, Elefai, a pleasant summer resort is also situated amid pine woods.

Heading out to Elefai west of Athens, you will pass the botanic garden on your left with its tall poplars.

A little further on, Plato's Olive Tree is one of the few survivors from the famous grove that once bordered the Kifissos from Kolonus to the sea. Along the same route, laurels sacred to Apollo once flourished in the area around the Monastery of Dhafni, which owes its name to these trees.

Wooded hills can also be seen to the west of the approach along the Mesogia road to the Temple of Poseidon at Sounion. However, I think that these woods are too far from the city to be a possible contender.

North west of Athens, Mount Parthena is cut by deep ravines and covered with pine trees. It has more than 1,000 plant species, several easy, well marked trails and two refuges.

The most appealing possibility for a setting for a

*Midsummer Night's Dream* is somewhere on the west slopes of Mount Hymettos, which reach almost to the

eastern outskirts of Athens. Here the aromatic plants and shrubs that produced the best food for bees in classical times are now less widespread, though terebinth, juniper, thyme, sage, mint and lavender are still to be found and you can easily imagine the intrigues of Puck and Oberon taking place in these fragrant surroundings. But what the place lacks in ebullient greenery it makes up for in love. A climb through the woodland around the 11th-century Kaisarianis monastery 5km from Athens will lead to a hilltop fountain idyllically set among pine, plane and cypress trees. The water that bubbles from this fountain was believed to have magical properties; it was dedicated to Aphrodite, whose temple stood nearby.

*EasyJet* (0990 292929) has promised a return fare of £140 when it begins flights from Luton to Athens on 10 July. The impending arrival has caused the other airlines flying to Athens – British Airways (0345 222111), Cronus Air (0171-589 3500), Olympic (0171-409 3400) and Virgin Atlantic (01293 747747) – to lower their fares; for a trip from Heathrow in June, Cronus is quoting £161 return.

For more on Greece, see page 6

eastern outskirts of Athens. Here the aromatic plants and shrubs that produced the best food for bees in classical times are now less widespread, though terebinth, juniper, thyme, sage, mint and lavender are still to be found and you can easily imagine the intrigues of Puck and Oberon taking place in these fragrant surroundings. But what the place lacks in ebullient greenery it makes up for in love. A climb through the woodland around the 11th-century Kaisarianis monastery 5km from Athens will lead to a hilltop fountain idyllically set among pine, plane and cypress trees. The water that bubbles from this fountain was believed to have magical properties; it was dedicated to Aphrodite, whose temple stood nearby.

Several tour operators, such as Hayes & Jarvis (0181-222 7811) are packaging flights with hotels for about the same (£400-£500) as you'd pay for the air fare alone

**A meal** "Jacques Chirac took President Yeltsin to Chez Yvonne at 10 rue Sanglier, a venue famous for its *patronne*, Alsatian specialities and traditional French cooking at surprisingly reasonable cost" – Margaret Campbell recommends this restaurant in Strasbourg, in her £250-guide to the city in next Wednesday's *Independent Eye*. A possible adjunct for those not fluent in French could be the *French Menu Reader* by Maggie Plunkett (Starway Publications, £4.99, call 01386 854864). It differentiates between *alsaciennne* ("a dish

mainly with ham, sausage and sauerkraut") and *alsaciennne* ("light dry white wine"). The author concedes "Since there are 250 ways to cook a fillet of sole, I hope you appreciate that no work of this size can ever be complete."

**A drink** The same book also has an English-French section, so if you are looking for *boissons sans alcool* you can ask for *standy (panache)* or soda water (*l'eau au siphon*).

**A week from now ...** ... the final preparations will be under way at St Helier's markets for Jersey's Good Food Festival Fair, which takes place on Sunday at the climax of the annual festival. Antony Worrall Thompson will be opening the event at 11am.

**KLM** (0990 074074) is offering a fare of £78 return from Southampton, £10 more from Stansted.

**A month from now ...** ... you could be warming up for the England-Colombia thriller at a new Colombian restaurant: *Mango*, in Highbury, north London (0171-704 1960), where the speciality is *smalles*. Or try the real thing on a trip to Bogotá on Avianca (0990 767747), the only non-stop from Britain to Colombia.

**A year from now ...** ... *Tribes Travel* (0178 685971) will run a trip to the American tribal lands of Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico. One of the 11 nights is spent sharing a Navaho *hogan*. The cost is £1,775 plus air fare to Arizona.

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**A train** Rail travel throughout Wales for less than £9 per day is offered by the Freedom of Wales Flexipass. From tomorrow you can travel anywhere on the network, in any eight days in a fortnight, for a total of £69 (railcard-holders £45.55). The pass also covers the "missing link" in the principality's rail system, allowing free travel on the narrow-gauge Ffestiniog Railway between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Porthmadog. Phone 01766 512340.

**A boat** The new Portsmouth-Cherbourg fast ferry opens up additional day-trip possibilities to northern France. This weekend is extremely busy, but later on there should be availability at £12 per person and £15 per car (P&O, 0990 980980).

**A room** ... on the island could be effectively

**CHECK IN**

**A plane**

Seven years ago there were no direct flights between Britain and Cuba, now you can choose from three services on Cubana (0171-734 1165) to Havana from Gatwick, plus one from Manchester. Tuesday's departure goes via the island of Cayo Largo, perhaps the most accessible desert island you can reach from Britain.

**A room** ... on the island could be effectively

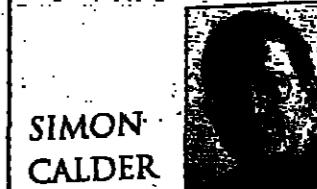
**mainly with ham, sausage and sauerkraut" and *alsaciennne* ("light dry white wine"). The author concedes "Since there are 250 ways to cook a fillet of sole, I hope you appreciate that no work of this size can ever be complete."**

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**SIMON CALDER**

The chap at the Alamo car rental depot in Orlando was charm itself. "Where will you be travelling this week?" Touched by his interest, I outlined my plan to head to Florida's Gulf Coast. Immediately his tone changed to one of surprise. Leaning forward with an air of deep concern, he said "Sir, I would strongly advise you to upgrade to a bigger model."

"No thanks, I'm very happy with a small car." The promised model was about the size of a Fiesta.

"If you were to upgrade, I could probably get you a mid-size for the price of a compact – just \$9.99 a day."

"And the rest, I thought uncharitably. Renting a car in America is like taking a freeway off-ramp as you pass somewhere dodgy, like Dallas. As soon as you deviate, whether from Interstate 10 or the pre-paid, fully inclusive car rental rates, you start paying. To that \$9.99 you can add Florida tax and airport fees, and probably a whole trunk-full of other charges; a state government that is mean-minded enough to charge renters five cents (yes, the equivalent of three pence) per day for "battery and tire disposal" has many ways to dip into your holiday spending.

"No thanks, I'll take the economy car." After a 10-hour flight I just wanted to get going. Instead, the discussions continued in a rather less cheerful manner.

"Just a moment, sir, I think we may have a problem."

"Ten minutes – and several hushed conversations with managerial types – later, he handed me the paperwork for a Suzuki Esteem. "It's rather larger than an economy model."

This was one of the largest car rental depots on the planet, yet it did not have a single small car. It is tempting to deduce from this that almost every client who has booked an economy model is persuaded to upgrade – and the corollary that anyone who stands firm will get a bigger car than planned anyway. Evidence for or against, please.

The whole episode was mildly amusing until I hit the rush-hour traffic and started thinking about the environmental implications. Since smaller cars generally use less fuel, you would hope that an environmentally responsible company would encourage people to trade down. Perhaps it is far fetched to imagine a rental rep asking "do you really need that gas-guzzling Lincoln, ma'am? The Geo Metro is much more economical." But at the very least, car rental companies should apply no pressure on customers to drive a bigger, heavier and more damaging car.

In Britain, the railway still provides an alternative for people who prefer not to drive – but in certain quarters there appears to be a concerted campaign to get people off the trains and on to the roads.

*Virgin Trains* is based in Birmingham. Last Tuesday, passengers at New Street station trying to find the right platform were confronted by a complete set of blank screens. (A ruse to prevent people seeing how late the trains were running?)

And get those sandwiches packed; from Monday, *Virginia* is stopping serving lunch or dinner on Birmingham-London trains.

# Pagnol's patch



The Provençal landscape immortalised by Marcel Pagnol remains frozen in time. By Ray Kershaw

So there it is, that fateful fountain, in the heart of *La Treille*, the real *Bastides Blanches* village of *Jean de Florette*. Today, though, it's not running. It would be romantic to think that Manon is up to her tricks again, but a kindly old gentleman explains from his shade that it's simply because the pipes are too old.

The fountain, of course, is what everyone remembers, where everyone comes first, and we're surprised there hasn't been a bit of timely plumbing. But then, *La Treille* takes its role as Provence's most famous village with a negligent detachment. Nowhere can you see the name of Pagnol. There are no shops, no souvenirs, no longer a café. There is not even – be warned – a public lavatory.

It's not that the residents wish you hadn't come. It's just that they're still a real community. In the shade of the plane trees outside the Republican Club, the men of the village still gather to play boules as they might have done in Manon's time. And, with true rural hospitality, twice while we're there ladies come to their doors to ask whether we need water.

There's a bus park today at the bottom of the hill, and a few commuter villas that make rich targets for burglars from Marseilles. But the village remains much as Pagnol pictured it in the opening paragraphs of *Jean de Florette*: under terracotta tiles huddled among cobble squares and alleyways, sheltering from the sun and the bite of the mistral. The single road soon peters out into the high garrigue, the wild Provençal countryside that is woven into all his books and films. The literary geography of few other writers can correspond so closely with that of their life.

Marcel Pagnol was born in Aubagne, the bustling little market town just down the hill. Totally Provençal, cheerfully unglamorous, it is famous for its *santons* – ceramic figurines – and for being the headquarters of the French Foreign Legion. And although Marcel was only two when his schoolmaster father transferred the family the dozen miles to Marseilles, Aubagne sees itself increasingly as the gateway to Pagnol land. The tourist office gets an average of 100 inquiries a day, from places as distant as China and Japan.

A few steps along the boulevard, *The Little World of Pagnol* is on its way to becoming the town's principal attraction. As well as memorabilia, it boasts an animated diorama of those ceramic figurines whose faces unmistakably belong to Yves Montand and Gérard Depardieu – those stars of the Claude Berri films. Though crowded with school kids, it proves less tacky than we fear. And, as with much else in Aubagne, we can't grumble at the cost – entrance is free.

But up behind *La Treille*, between the *tramezes* of limestone peaks forming the Massif de

mary! It's like Zola's paradise. It's more beautiful than paradise!"

Overgrown with clematis, the place still has a vaguely ramshackle look, though peering over the olive grove we discover a new swimming pool in the backyard. Then comes the garrigue, dense with aromatic herbs, cut by deep ravines. And somewhere it's all up there: Manon's cave, the hidden spring, the Vallon of Passetemps where Marcel's father won his glory, the cave of Grosbois on the summit of *Jaoume* where Marcel and Lili, the peasant boy who

From our windy eyrie, two kilometres above a pocket-sized Marseilles, M del Rosso points out the sites of Pagnol's life. He ought to know. He says he worked as an extra in the films. In the following days, wherever we go, in caves, in lonely *vallons*, we seem fated to meet M Louis. Although he has no English, his exuberance alone must be well worth his fee.

Occasionally you meet other bands of Pagnol pilgrims, but the atmospheric landscape hides a hundred secret places. Among the herbs and the wild flowers, there is sometimes a sense of walking with ghosts. On a bare stretch of garrigue we come upon a ruined hut, haunted by Marcel's younger brother Paul. While Marcel's love of the hills made him a writer Paul fulfilled his by becoming a goat herder, living in this hut with his harmonica for company. Now only the foundations remain, with wild roses growing among the rubble. He died at 34 from a tumour of the brain – another heartbreak for Marcel, who felt the force of destiny, cruel and benign, so often in his life. Paul was almost certainly his model for Manon.

Pagnol now lies in the little cemetery just down the hill from the famous open aqueduct that flows through the book and film of *My Mother's Château*. There are many flowers on the grave, and we read a note written in English: "Thank you, Marcel, for the joy that you gave us." I've brought a few carnations. That seems the most appropriate. But my wife's been picking wild flowers from the hills. She thought he'd like those best.

*Easyliner* (0990 292929) has flights from Luon and Liverpool to Nice starting at £98 return, but as the summer peak and World Cup approach seats at this price are scarce. The most reliable economic choice is to use *Eurostar* (0345 303030) from London Waterloo, changing at Paris or Lille for a direct service to Avignon. The journey time is about nine hours, and the fare is £119 return. The French Travel Centre in the UK is at 178 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AL (0891 244123, a premium-rate number). The *Cadogan Guide to Provence* (£14.99) is handy.



Lavender cultivation in Provence, above, and Daniel Auteuil and Yves Montand, left, in 'Jean de Florette'. Photographs: Herbert Kranawitter/Bruce Coleman; The Ronald Grant Archive (left)

taught him the secrets of the hills, met the fearless eagle owl while sheltering from a storm.

We have the wild landscape to ourselves. The only sounds in the hot silence are the chirping of cicadas and the drone of insects. But as we struggle to the summit of La Grande Tête Rouge, long before we see him we catch the animated oratory of M Louis del Rosso. He is not only, he tells us, the best Pagnol Country guide; he's also the president of the Pagnol Association. He is leading two Swiss tourists, who are getting as much fun from his ebullient eccentricity as from their guided tour itself.

## Town of anchovies and illusions

In Chiavari on the Italian Riviera you start to wonder what continent you're in, writes Michael Delahaye

As with all the best discoveries, we came upon Chiavari by chance, late one evening *en route* from Bordeaux to Florence. It was 8pm and we'd been driving for 12 hours. Our little hire car was protesting – and here we were, just past the French-Italian border and facing the interminable string of tunnels that punctuate the autostrada of the Ligurian Riviera.

We needed to eat and sleep. But where? The only names that stood out on the map were Genoa, La Spezia and San Remo – a choice between a port, a naval base and a song festival. Scanning more closely, my eye focused on a seaside place I had never heard of and, as it turned out, couldn't even pronounce: Chiavari (the accent is on the second syllable: key-ah-va-ree – important, as otherwise it can be confused with the verb meaning to have sex).

Along its front, Chiavari is an unremarkable Mediterranean resort with perhaps a tad more timbre than most. The water and the beaches are scrupulously clean and – a boon for those with small children – the swimming areas are enclosed by low breakwaters of boulders that still allow the sea to circulate. (Rather less suitable for small children is some of the amorous nocturnal activity here, involving the local adolescents.)

If you want to stay on the front there's a fair choice of two- and three-star hotels. Our room in an unpretentious three-star establishment – with *en suite* bathroom, breakfast and parking – cost just 80,000 lire (about £30). And there was the bonus of waking up to the weather forecast on RAI-1, given in full military fig by one Captain Paolo Capizzi – no doubt of the Carabinieri Cloudbusters Brigade. In Italy the weather is too important to leave to civilians.

But what really justifies at least a stop-over is what you may never find unless you walk 100 metres away from the front, under the railway line. Behind it lies the old town. The atmosphere is a mix of Italian and, bizarrely, South American. The streets have names such as Corso Montevideo; there are huge white churches and consulates for Peru, Chile and Uruguay. When you spot an old gentleman in a linen suit doffing his panama, you start seriously to wonder which continent you're in.

The explanation is that towards the end of the last century, many of the town's sons emigrated to South America, made their fortunes and either came back themselves or sent their money back. The blend of architecture that resulted can make you gasp or laugh.

Take five minutes to inspect the *palazzine* along the Corso Mille. Even Italy doesn't offer many chances to see peach plasterwork with terracotta embellishments and turquoise shutters – on the one building.

Now take a right turn off the Corso Mille into the commercial center of the old town and, a second time, you start to wonder whether you've stumbled on to the back lot of a film studio. What from a distance look like ordinary architectural features – carved stone, pointed brickwork, protruding sills – turn out to be painted illusions. The technique – *fina architettura* – started in the 17th century as a cheap way for the average Chiavarese to tart up his modestly plastered pile. In spirit, it wasn't so different from the penchant of today's DIY enthusiasts for taping instant leaded lights to their double-glazing. Down the centuries, the effect in Chiavari has been to make even the relatively recent look instantly old.

The town's undoubtedly wealth is reflected in the quality of the shops. Old money never dies here; it just turns over. If you have a weakness for designer kitchenware, if names such as Guzzini and Alessi make you weak in the wallet, prepare to shed your lire. And remember: the great thing about any Italian gadget – a Parmesan grater, a cappuccino foamer or a humble orange squeezer – is that, if you get bored looking at it, you can always use it.

Predictably, the local culinary specialities are fish based. For a taste of the best at around £15 a head, try the *Crema de Mar* in the Piazza Cademartori. The fresh anchovies in oil and the clam spaghetti make excellent starters, particularly when sliced down with the tangy Sardinian house white. And, if you really want to impress your fellow diners, pat your lips and murmur: "Siamo nati per soffrire" – we're born to suffer.

But if, on the day you leave, you just want to pack something snackable for the journey, do what we did: go along to one of the bakers in the Via Martiri della Liberazione, buy a large tile of freshly baked focaccia (the flat, dimpled bread made with olive oil) and then walk along to the Bottega del Formaggio at No 208, where Gianni or Mauro will fill it with cheese and prosciutto. Chiavari is that sort of place.

The nearest airport to Chiavari is Genoa. The only airline with flights there from Britain is British Airways (0345 222111), daily from Gatwick. A World Offer fare has just expired, which means you can expect to pay around £200 return. You may do better to fly to Milan, which is about 100 minutes and £10 away by train. See 48 Hours in Milan (p 8) for details of flights there.

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# Slow train to China

The journey from Almaty to Urumchi was an adventure in itself for Amar Grover

Almaty, capital of Kazakhstan, is famous for its apples, but at the cavernous Central Market there were none. As the day wore on the city's wholesome, almost quaint complexion ripened into something less mellow.

Two men and a shrieking woman bounced out of a drinking-tent and biffed each other wildly. Later, beside the railway station, our taxi driver shook his fist and quivered with rage when I paid him what had been agreed. Outside, against a wall two thugs quietly slugged away at each other. I hastened to the ticket hall, anxious to please whatever tetchy clerk might trouble to sell me a ticket.

All fears proved groundless: within minutes I had a ticket and instructions to report for train No 14 the following afternoon. We were bound for Urumchi in north-west China's Xinjiang Province. The twice-weekly Genghis Khan Express started up in 1990 when China linked her railways to the USSR's vast network. It had been a sensitive border, bruised by ideological scraps and territorial squabbles; today business is the balm that soothes these once creaking joints.

Almaty's is a busy station, but in the rarefied hush of the Khan's separate waiting hall, we were cocooned from the hustle and bustle. Around us waited groups of Kazakhs and Chinese and a few Uighurs from Xinjiang, mostly smart and prosperous-looking, with ordered piles of baggage. A neat *provodnitsa*, or attendant, one for each car, confirmed the aura of privilege by escorting us to spotless compartments with a cheery smile.

We had treated ourselves to a first-class, two-berth compartment and for once, the Kazakhs gave value for money. Not only did the reading lights light and the locks lock but the sheets were crisp and the pillows soft. My companion began nesting – some 40 hours of languor lay ahead – and I darted out for provisions. Miss *provodnitsa* grinned when I returned with bottles of absurdly cheap champagne. "Honeymoon?" she ventured saucily.

Almaty's concrete blight had fallen away by the time she brought us small towels and a Thermos of boiling water. One of the pleasures of a long train journey is that with so few things to do, you can usually do them well – and so we began the first of several lavish picnics. The market stocked monstrous strawberries and dark, juicy cherries. Sensational Uzbek raisins exploded with flavour; dried apricots melted like fondant.

Our carriage was half empty. Down at the end a lone, gloomy Chinese scowled at the merest hint of conversation. But our neighbours, two elderly Uighur couples, cackled away merrily and dispensed Turkish delight. Years ago they had escaped to Istanbul and now, thanks to the Khan, could return with ease to Xinjiang and visit relatives.

Next morning we popped up the blind to see a vast steppe of feebly greens and burnt yellows. The placid blue waters of Lake Balkash stretched away like a sea. Occasionally we clattered past dreary hamlets that sketched hopeless, weatherbeaten lives. At Aktogay the track divides and were shunted south east off the Turkestan line towards the Jungarian Gap.

This unexpectedly broad corridor framed by dreary ranges has shaped history. It has acted as a conduit for marauding hordes and foaming nomads,



Russian and Kazakh children playing on the train between Almaty and Urumchi

Photograph: Ian Berry/Magnum

and there is every chance that Genghis Khan himself charged through the scrub to conquer a good chunk of the then known world. We, too, rattled along – though not much faster than a gallop. I tossed raisins, caught them in my mouth and waited for Druzbiza, where the fun began in earnest.

The Russians and Chinese may have agreed they were Communists, then bickered over detail, but there's no denying that their railway gauges are different. We drew alongside an interminable line of bogies, then gently nudged to and fro for half an hour until just so. As the cars were uncoupled one by one, men in boiler suits clambered aboard. Off came the floor hatches, out came huge, oily pins, and when jacks had lowered us 15ft off the ground, our bogies were wheeled away. Navvies looked up, waved and guffawed.

I soon discovered why. The tinkering continued for many hours and meanwhile we were deprived of toilets – they were locked. Miss *provodnitsa* had refused to open them before disappearing. I studied our tickets for a caution, but the Cyrillic was beyond me.

A sudden jolt prepared us for Kazakh Customs and Immigration. While most passengers are treated with brusque indifference, some travellers are processed with menace; let's just say I was processed rather than treated. One strip-search later, an embarrassed Russian captain returned my nearly folded \$100 bill, which had been secreted in his corporal's boot. "Excuse me" he said deferentially, before they calmly resumed lounging and chatting.

As we crossed into the People's Republic, a welcome breeze whipped through the windows. Many borders are peculiar places, full of stock suspicion and absurd posturing. Yet minutes later, we were met with charming ceremony in the Chinese sector. It was dusk; red flags fluttered patriotically, martial music screeched from a loudspeaker and guards saluted our arrival. I have rarely felt so important, and in China – where sometimes you feel painfully unwanted – this was no mean achievement. Officials bounded aboard, as happy as children, to start another round of inspections.

It was not my book that they disliked. Its 16 pictures of the Central Asia that preceded Communist meddling were ignored. Nor were they offended by the chapter "Urumchi: Most Sinister Town in Asia". No, it was our precious fruit that bothered them. The People's Customs had their regulations. All but one bag of our finest fruit was plucked off with salivating grins. A solitary guard appeared. "May I make this special request?" he faltered before pleading for English language magazines or papers. Eventually, in hot darkness, our train headed away. The home run lay across stony desert gleaming under clear moonlit skies. Next morning, after nearly 1,400 km and just an hour late, we reached the hazy, bustling building site that is modern Urumchi. It was far too busy to be sinister, and we trotted off to find a room and something good to say.

You can spend a weekend in Almaty and the Kazakh Steppe on the new British Airways flight from Heathrow; the lowest official fare is £622, but Regent Holidays (0117-921 1711) has a four-day inclusive package for £599.

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Tel: 01227 872133.

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Children under twelve stay free if sharing their parent's room.

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Not just  
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from  
Monday,  
day-trippers  
can travel  
on the West  
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William for  
£20 return  
Photograph:  
Chris Bacon



# The golden age of the iron horse

Why not take advantage of the special deals being offered by competing private rail companies? Simon Calder shows how

Last weekend was the time to enjoy rail travel at its best. As the May sunshine dazzled from the bright steel rails, I lounged while the countryside raced energetically past. Early summer, I reflected, is ideal for using this most civilised form of transport – especially at fares that seem improbably low.

You won't be surprised to learn that this exercise in contentment took place not in Britain but in Italy, where an extensive, accessible rail system is regarded as a matter for national pride.

But whatever your view on the wisdom or otherwise of rail privatisation, the arrival tomorrow of the summer timetable will give the traveller more options than at any time since the Sixties. Not only has the desecration of UK railways begun by Dr Beeching finally begun to be reversed, with places such as Blackpool, Ramsgate and Shrewsbury returning to the InterCity network; the train operators are also creating some imaginative fares for rail travellers.

Keep on the *Independent* track, and

you can take a 1,000-mile grand tour of England and Scotland for less than £80, subject to a bit of advance planning.

Start from Birmingham, where

much of the rail action is taking place.

You can travel from Birmingham to

Edinburgh for £30 return. Elegantly,

this fare allows you to use two entirely

distinct routes: north on the West

Coast line, south on the East Coast.

After the northward rush through

Staffordshire, Cheshire and Lancashire, the Lake District flashes past to the west. Later, the climb to Shap summit and the race through the borders from Carlisle are among the most

dramatic stretches of track in Britain. From Edinburgh you can plug into the ScotRail network which, from Monday, will offer a great day out. A special carriage is being attached to the West Highland Line sleeper at Edinburgh for a £20 return ride. The departure time is a bright-and-early 5.05am, but it gets you to Fort William at 10.25am in time for a hearty nine-hour hike. This summer, too, bikes will travel free on all ScotRail services.

The trip south from Edinburgh arcs east in a neat counterpart to the west-early trip north, sweeping you close to the Northumberland coast and past the *Angel of the North* near Gateshead before swooping around Durham.

Don't travel back to Birmingham just yet; abandon your journey at York. Show your rail ticket at the tourist office first, and you get vouchers for half-price admission to the National Railway Museum and many other attractions.

York to Pontefract defeated me. I can see no alternative to a standard single costing £4.90 for the 15-mile journey. But it gets you safely across the border into West Yorkshire, where suddenly fares fall to near-Italian levels.

A Day Ranger ticket costs £4.40 and entitles up to three adults to travel anywhere in the county by train or bus (after 9.30am on weekdays, any time at weekends).

This dream ticket will ease you as quickly or slowly as you like between Pontefract and Wakefield, where you have a baffling choice of fares on the fast-track GNER train to London.

The range of tickets to King's Cross

is more complicated than ever it was under British Rail. At the top end, the full one-way fare is £52.50; next a SuperSaver single £48; an Apex single £28.50. Crafty one-way travellers will instead buy a day return, price £22, and throw away the inbound half. Cheapest of all is the new evening ticket, which begins on 1 June. The "After Eight" ticket allows a single journey departing after 8pm for £12 anywhere on the GNER network – which could be a journey as long as the 438 miles between Motherwell and King's Cross.

Once in London you find all kinds of special deals, such as the

Thameslink offer, tomorrow only, allowing unlimited travel between

Bedford and Brighton for £1; to qualify, you must buy the ticket today.

Returning from the capital to Birmingham allows you to benefit from the most tangible piece of competition so far. Chiltern Trains, which runs from Marylebone via Banbury to Birmingham, and Silverlink (from Euston via Northampton) are both aggressively

chasing Virgin's main line route. As a result, Richard Branson's company is offering a silly price for a 120-mile journey even at peak times: just £7, if you book a Virgin Value ticket by 6pm the day before.

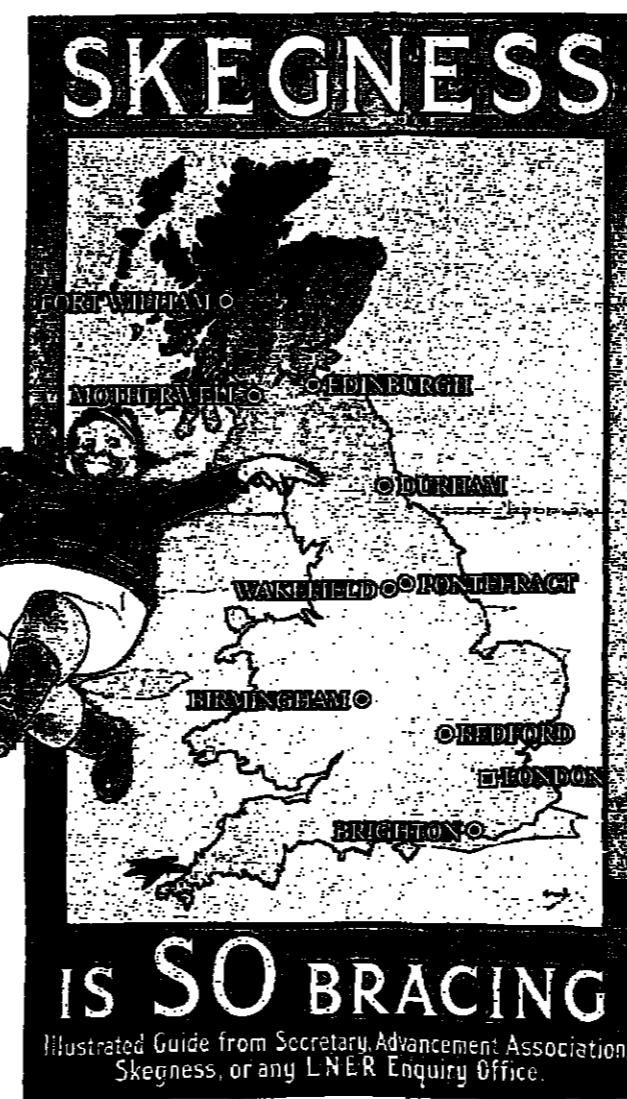
The best bargain of all cannot be

found in England, Wales or Scotland;

tomorrow, and on any other Sunday, rail travellers in Northern Ireland can roam the length and breadth of the province for just £3.

This dream ticket will ease you as quickly or slowly as you like between Pontefract and Wakefield, where you have a baffling choice of fares on the fast-track GNER train to London.

The range of tickets to King's Cross



## CROSSED LINES

If you have seen a figure scavenging furiously around station platforms and booking offices in the past few weeks, it was probably me. Trying to find out what rail deals are around is an exercise as frustrating as a stalled train. Most of the bargains here were picked up from posters and pamphlets in the stations themselves.

For schedule and fare information, every train operator's automated phone system refers you to the National Rail Enquiry number, 0845 484950.

In my experience, the chances of receiving sensible, accurate information from this source for any remotely complicated journey are minimal.

The reason seems to be the way that the system is set up. Your call is diverted to one of several call centres around Britain. Some of these are run by train operating companies, who are not always assiduous about giving helpful advice about rivals' services. Others are run by telephone companies whose staff need not ever have been near a train.

An example of how even a simple request can be mishandled:

on Wednesday this week, I called to ask the time of a train from London Waterloo to Bath. The subsequent conversation went like this:

"From Waterloo?"

"Yes, please."

"To Bath?"

"Yes, please."

"I've got nothing from

Waterloo – all the trains for Bath

go from Paddington."

Wales & West, which runs trains daily from Waterloo to Bath and beyond, pays thousands of pounds each year for a telephone service that diverts potential customers to its rival, Great Western Trains.

The next question, to a different operator, was about a ScotRail promotion on Sundays giving a 50 per cent reduction to anyone travelling with a child. I checked on a specific journey from Edinburgh to Aberdeen. That it was not going to be a productive conversation became evident almost immediately:

"Aberdeen. Hmm. Is that A-B-E-R...?" Twenty minutes later, via a ScotRail operator based in Newcastle, I finally got the information I needed.

No wonder motoring is so popular.

SC

## Rail to runway

Gatwick has the best rail links of any UK airport. From Monday, Thameslink will get you there from London Bridge in an impressive 26 minutes, eclipsing the Gatwick Express. But the new timetable shows the others catching up fast.

Starter, from where Go started flights yesterday, used to be served by one train a day from Birmingham; somewhat inconveniently, it arrived after all the flights had left. From Monday, hourly services will connect the Essex airport with Cambridge, Leicester and Birmingham.

East Midlands airport, fearlessly difficult to reach without a car, last Monday finally achieved a regular bus link with the nearest station, Loughborough. Travellers were previously assured that such a link existed, even though it didn't.

Anyone reading the new timetable and planning to catch the 9.54am from Brighton to Luton airport will be unimpressed when it sails straight through the yet-to-be-completed station; the £12m project should be ready some time this summer.

More ghost trains appear in the Heathrow Express timetable, which promises 15-minute links from London Paddington to Terminals 1, 2

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# 5,000 years in one weekend

The Luxor massacre edged Egypt off the tourist map, writes Anna Dedhar, but now's the time to go back. And where else but Cairo can you take in five millennia of civilisation in one brief break?

Some people seemed doubtful when I told them I was going to Egypt for the weekend. It is a long way (a four-and-a-half-hour flight from Heathrow); it is getting hot at this time of year, and, of course, everyone remembers the massacre of 58 tourists at Luxor. But friends who have visited the country since the killings in November said that security has been tightened, and there was a four-night trip to Giza - home of the pyramids and the Sphinx - staying in a four-star hotel, for £415. It was too good an opportunity to miss.

Arriving late on Friday night, we were driven straight to the Mena House Hotel, a grand establishment popular with travellers in the days of the Empire, the headquarters for the Allied chief of command in the Second World War and the base for peace negotiations between Egypt and Israel. At first we thought we had been cheated of the promised view of a pyramid from our room, but as we peered through the dark night our eyes focused on a huge mass, so close we could practically touch it from our balcony.

Without their original polished limestone cladding, the pyramids have an unnerving habit of blending into the background of desert and sky.

Opulent in decor and lavish in facilities though the hotel is, the visitors were too few to make it bustle. Driving through Cairo with its jammed, manic traffic at almost any time of day and night, and navigating the packed Khan al-Khalili bazaar one evening, we found noise and crowd levels painful. But at the tourist sites the little boys trying to sell postcards and the old men offering camel rides outnumbered the visitors.

It was wonderful to be able to stroll around and stand and gaze, appreciating the monstrous scale of the pyramids of Cheops - the highest, at 137m - Chephren and Mycerinus and the wives' smaller ones, the Sphinx and the vast expanse of desert stretching away with little to interrupt the view except a few huddles of camels and riders posed timlessly against tombs or dunes. But for the Egyptians, the collapse of their tourist industry is, of course, disastrous. Security at tourist sites has been tightened. At the hotel and museum, entrance was through metal detectors - although the hotel's was malfunctioning. There were cameras scanning the areas, rather lackadaisical young armed soldiers and Tourist and Antiquities Police patrolling on camels.

Perhaps the lack of visitors has also cut down the number of vendors, but there was not as much hassle as I had expected. Of course those with papyrus bookmarks and embroidered headbands to sell tried hard, but few were really persistent. However, some people found that the price

of a camel ride did not include a dismounting fee; they had to hand over more cash before the beast was allowed to knock down for them to get off. It was also disconcerting to have a camel cantering after you and breathing hotly down your neck while its owner tried to persuade you to give him your camera to take a picture of you.

Since we had just three days, we wanted to pack in as much as possible. So we went to Cairo's Egyptian Museum, where we were saturated with the golden glories from the kings' tombs - including the outstanding haul from Tutankhamun's previously unlooted chambers - swed by the royal mummies and overwhelmed by the sheer quantities of sarcophagi, statuettes, papyrus and jewellery. We went to Memphis, the 3100BC capital of the Old Kingdom where there is little except the giant statue of Rameses II, and to Saqqara, the Old Kingdom necropolis with its tombs, temples and pyramids - including Zoser's step pyramid (the oldest, from the 27th century BC) and the tomb of Ti with its walls of painted panels - and to Saqqara country club to admire the fine Arab horses.

Two friends who had been to Cairo before hired a car and driver by the day and visited places off the beaten track, including pyramids which are on no road; but we wanted to see the main sights first, so we went as unashamed tourists by coach - with an armed guard and lots of bottled water. Ancient Egypt is highly photogenic, but keen photographers should beware the camera fees that are almost invariably added to admission fees: £5-£10 Egyptian for an ordinary camera, and up to £100 Egyptian for a video-camera.

We also saw the *son et lumière* at Giza, which is a melodramatic, hour-long mix of floodlighting and booming soundtrack to sketch a history of Egypt told beside the great Sphinx, illustrated by hieroglyphics and moving pictures on tomb walls etched by lasers. There must be seats for an audience of 1,000, but on the Saturday evening barely 100 were taken.

And, of course, we found time to swim and lounge by the pool, where there were trees for shade, a breeze to cool the afternoon sun and waiters to bring snacks and drinks. It's surprising how much you can pack into a three-day weekend.

Anna Dedhar paid £415 for a long weekend at the pyramids, booked through Jules Verne (0171-616 1000) and including BA scheduled flights from Heathrow to Cairo, plus four nights B&B at the Mena House Hotel (Cairo 383 3444), Giza. British nationals need a visa, but the Egyptian Consulate in London (0171-235 9777/9719) is giving them away free at the moment.



Nearly 5,000 years before Coca-Cola came to Cairo, Zoster's step pyramid, above, was already reaching for the sky. Above left, Tutankhamun's perfectly preserved death mask, part of the Egyptian Museum's vast collection. Photographs: Geoff Perry

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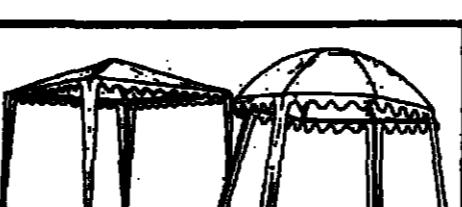
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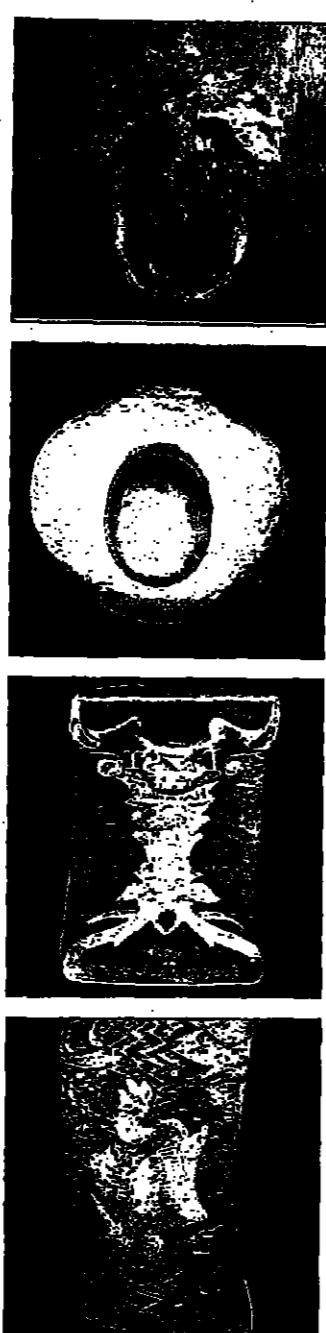
Claire Gervat talks to a master silversmith

Malcolm Appleby works magic with metal. Engraving, jewellery-making, carving – it would be inappropriate to call him simply a silversmith. And life is becoming increasingly hectic. Not only is he "going non-stop", as he puts it, with extra commissions because of the millennium, he has also become a father. Even now, he's busily designing a gold bangle for little May, which naturally he's decorating with may flowers.

On his CV Malcolm describes his field of work as "decorative and functional ironwork; jewellery; medals; prints; engraving on glass". This last area was in fact his first; he studied engraving at art college, and was apprenticed to a London gunsmith, John Wilkes. Then curiosity prompted him to broaden his scope. "My eyes were all around looking at everything, so I gradually became involved in jewellery and silverware, and now I use a lot of iron and gold. I like to think of myself as an engraver rather than a silversmith, but there's nothing I like doing better than designing something with absolutely no engraving on it at all."

What that means, in effect, is that Malcolm's clients have commissioned him for a wide range of projects. For example, one woman who had bought his silver and gold pieces in the past approached him to make her a magnificent door-knocker. "It's blacksmithed out of iron, then I've carved it and fired gold over the surface, which is what gives it all that rich colouring." It's also what makes it not a little expensive, and Malcolm admits that something similar would set you back around £10,000.

Yet he's quick to point out that not everything he makes is so expensive; prices start at £8 for silver buttons. Not that the cost deters people from starting, and then enlarging, their collections of Applebyware. "I've made a lot of large silver bowls for the table. One client has a whole series of large silver leaves – and when I say large I mean massive – that go down the centre of the table."



Malcolm Appleby's pieces combine engraving, ironwork and carving

Some customers have strong ideas about what they want, but this is not essential. Many of his commissioned works are based on something he has done before: a small geranium-leaf plate inspired the series of leaves, for instance. "And I make up pieces for the fun of it and that often stimulates clients to follow that direction or think in a similar way and adapt my ideas." Or you could just adapt your way of living to his ideas, like the couple who moved to a smarter house because they thought their fine new silver bowls made the old place look shabby.

Malcolm's customer base is as varied as his work, including monied landowners, people in camper vans and old school friends who just happen to be passing his house in Scotland. Other clients include the board of trustees at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, for whom he made a seal which Sir Roy Strong, then the director, called "probably one of the most vulgar pieces we have in the museum, and I mean that as a compliment".

Currently he's doing a series of production pieces for a London-based company, and he also has an important exhibition coming up later in the year at Aberdeen Art Gallery. He classes himself, with his tongue firmly in his cheek, as a "multi-media post-post-modern maximalist with minimalist overtones".

"You must get that in," he says, trying to hold back a chuckle, "with three 'post's, because I noticed in some trendy crafts magazine that someone had two, in all seriousness."

And then he went off to finish that all-important bangle.

*Malcolm Appleby can be contacted at Auldeag, Grandtully, By Aberfeldy, Perthshire (01330 844642). His one-man exhibition, '30 Years', will be at the Aberdeen Art Gallery from 10 October to 21 November. For more information, call Christine Rew on 01244 646333.*



## Sweet smells for healing hands

"You've heard of the Reduced Shakespeare Company, who introduce you to Shakespeare's plays in two and a half hours? Well, this is the Reduced Aromatherapy Company," began our tutor Lorna, on our one-day course at the Clare Maxwell-Hudson School. The agenda was to look at the plant fragrances (essential oils) and the way they work. Finally we would have a go at prescribing and mixing our own scented massage oils.

This game-plan seemed to meet the requirements of the assortment of people on the course. Some, like me, wanted to learn the basics for use at home; others were considering taking up aromatherapy as a profession. Taeko Arai from Japan, who is working as a midwife, was particularly interested in aromatherapy for mother and baby. Fiona Stoppard is about to start a massage diploma course, from which she hopes to earn a living. Since aromatherapy uses massage as one of its most effective tools she wanted to get a good grounding in the subject.

In the wake of the recent antibiotic scare, it did seem particularly appropriate to be attending the course. "The best recipe for health is to apply sweet scents to the brain," said the Classical Greek poet Anacreon. Smell, of all the senses, has the most direct connection to the limbic section of the brain, a part associated with memory, arousal and emotion. So the fragrant oils can have a significant effect on mood and mental state. They are also absorbed through the skin. Many of them have antiseptic qualities as well as analgesic, antiviral and anti-inflammatory

Fiona MacAulay tries her hand at the art of aromatherapy

toxic effects, said Lorna. They are distilled from plants and are in fact not oily at all, but are called "oils" because they float on water.

Lorna took us through the different ways in which the essential oils can be used. The most obvious is massage, prepared by adding a few drops to a carrier such as almond or apricot oil. Alternatively they can be diluted in water to spray around the room, or wafted by the use of a vaporiser. You could add a few drops to bath water or use the oil in an inhalation. For administering to a localised area, dilute in water and then apply as a compress. A few of the oils have a beneficial effect when used neat on the skin, but they are strong and so should be used with care.

We next moved on to smelling some oils. Lorna passed each of us a thin strip of paper dotted with a blob of oil and we sniffed it in front of our noses, shut our eyes and were then asked to describe the scent and its effect, helped along by Lorna. "Is it warming or cooling? Calming or invigorating? Does it go to your head?" In this way we went through 14 of the most commonly used oils, identified them and discussed their different functions. Frankincense "is a spiritual oil that helps with grief and anxiety. German choirboys were found to be getting stoned on the frankincense in church incense, so the chemical that

has the hallucinogenic qualities is now removed. Clary sage is an antidepressant..."

To try out our new knowledge, we split into pairs to make a restorative potion. Lorna recommended that we use no more than four oils in a blend. These were then diluted in a base oil to rub into the skin. The base oils have therapeutic qualities in themselves and are selected to suit each individual's skin type.

I was prescribing for Elaine Jacobs, who wanted something to relax her on stressful days. We chose camomile and neroli (from the blossom of the bitter orange tree), and added tea-tree for its anti-microbial action. Elaine wanted a light base oil so we chose grape-seed, with a small amount of evening primrose oil. To round things off, Lorna showed us a few of the basic massage movements, and still working in pairs we applied our personalised oils to each other. The trouble was, now that we were completely relaxed, we had to make our way home.

The cost of the course was the same as the price of an hour of aromatherapy massage, which seemed a bargain to me. Spend the same amount again on Clare Maxwell-Hudson's aromatherapy massage book and a small selection of oils, and you may feel you have made a sound investment in health and pleasure.

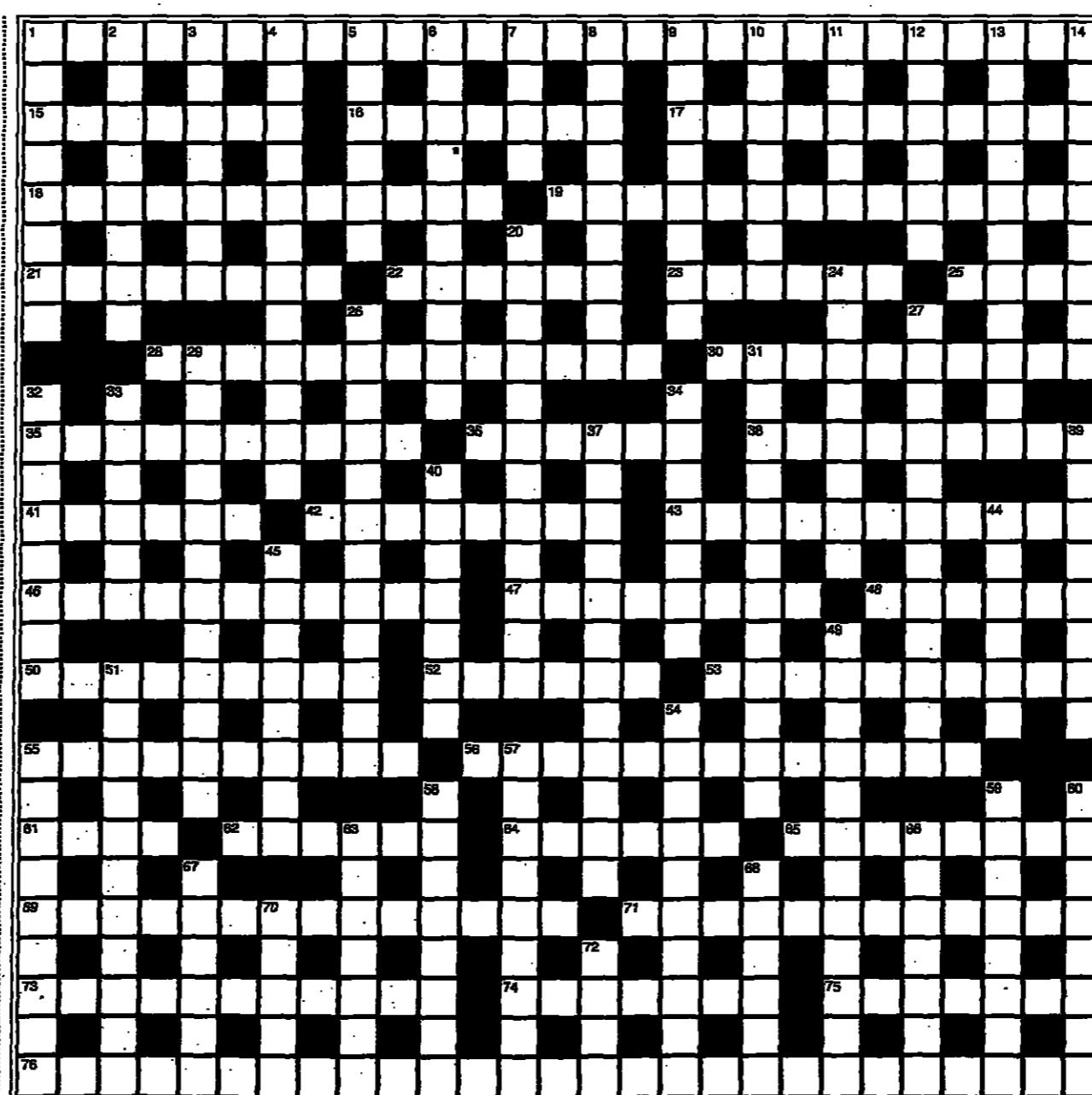
*The Clare Maxwell-Hudson School in London (0181-450 6494) runs 'Introducing Aromatherapy' one-day courses, cost £40. There is also a mail-order service for aromatherapy products.*

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#### CRYPTIC CLUES

##### ACROSS

1 All the professional players having gone to heaven, presumably? (4,2,4,2,7,8)  
 15 Stir too vigorously making Italian dish? (7)  
 16 Proposition suggesting our opponents should hold deposit? (7)  
 17 Discovery leading to honour (11)  
 18 Victor behaves so prudently at hunt parties (12)  
 19 Uncooperative person setting up stall? (14)  
 21 Succeeded in cooking curries for holidaymakers (8)  
 22 Volume woman holds open to reveal what's inside (6)  
 23 Overbalanced a little coming out for a spot of sledging (6)  
 25 A delay obtaining backing for festivity (4)  
 28 Sadler and wiser as an ex-magician, perhaps? (13)  
 30 Pity Alice's mislaid bag (10)  
 35 Secret entrance to cave (4,6)  
 36 Way sailor initially gets overseas (6)  
 38 Desire, on hopping into bed, grew rapidly (9)  
 41 Cool accept retrogressive atmosphere in monastery (6)  
 42 Old widow mugged in dangerous forest (4,4)  
 43 Love leads to outpouring of bitter, acid remarks, by the way (6,5)  
 46 Gamble recklessly in old copper coins – more than one collection (11)  
 47 Contends high temperature restricts the most: overheat? (8)  
 48 Regulate some staying overnight (6)  
 50 Abnormal development in Gulf as timing somehow succeeds? (9)  
 52 Paintings framed in Spain and Hungary, extremely crude (6)  
 53 Article entrusted to engineers by Defence Intelligence vanishes (10)  
 55 S American location featured in a rival soap, perhaps? (10)  
 56 Timing red (13)  
 61 Timber trade (4)  
 62 Augment amount charged for accommodation in inn when returning (4,2)  
 64 Attempt by short story writer to produce verse (6)



55 Distinguish cause of problem in feature below small sketch (8)  
 40 Account of Greek shipowner not settled? (7)  
 44 Most powerful Roman chariot broken by main sticking up (6)  
 45 Last time a temperature's entered, just after mid-July (8)  
 49 Place up north or one down south for attractive European? (3,9)

51 Girl fibs about worker initially retracting chivalrous remarks (11)  
 54 Croupier to set out for Caribbean island (6,4)  
 55 Guide from Rome to escort me (9)  
 57 Great elation about first show from bedding plant? (9)  
 58 Piece of pork not required by wife (5,3)  
 59 Support for champion (8,4)

60 Be flexible, accommodating Father – that's giving help (8)  
 63 Angie opened up by opponent in vain (7)  
 66 I'm to be in church on important date – fancy! (7)  
 67 Mix into cocktail if iced, it's divine (6)  
 68 Import produce (6)  
 70 Hollow cavity comes in useful to some extent (5)  
 72 Consignment from which boy appears to have pinched ring (4)

#### By Spurius CONCISE CLUES

##### ACROSS

1 First line of nursery rhyme (3,4,4,3,1,5,3,4)

15 Absconder (7)  
 16 Standard work (7)  
 17 Fare served up as slapstick humour? (7,4)  
 18 Environment (12)  
 19 Deprive of voting rights (14)  
 21 Aesthetically pleasing (8)  
 22 Squirm (6)  
 23 Girl's name (6)  
 25 Formerly (4)  
 28 Prophesy (13)  
 30 Flap covering entrance of larynx (10)  
 35 Rich people (10)  
 36 Sexual desire (6)  
 36 Lyrical (9)  
 41 Foundation garment (4-2)  
 42 Idealistic (8)  
 43 Plan beforehand (11)  
 46 Disposition (11)  
 47 Declare (8)  
 48 Traditional practice (6)  
 50 Preventing from happening (9)  
 52 No.1 or No.2 batsman (6)  
 53 Temporary child-minder (4-6)  
 55 Type of dwelling (10)  
 61 Obstacle to progress (8-5)  
 62 Placed horizontally (4)  
 63 Decorative plaster (6)  
 64 Papal ambassador (6)  
 65 On each occasion that (8)  
 69 Health service professionals (6,8)  
 71 Small airfield (7-5)  
 73 Detestable thing (11)  
 74 Exact (7)  
 75 Marijuana cigarettes (7)  
 76 First line of hymn (3,6,6,3,9)

##### DOWN

1 Abroad (8)  
 2 Ornament (8)  
 3 Sacreligious (7)  
 4 Attributes of successful gardeners (5,7)  
 5 Flower (6)  
 6 Overstate (10)  
 7 Church feature (4)  
 8 Building designer (9)  
 9 Avoided (8)  
 10 Tranquil (7)  
 11 Japanese city (5)  
 12 Take off (6)  
 13 Headstrong (11)  
 14 Radio audience (9)  
 20 Attribute constantly in evidence in one's work (3-2-5)  
 24 Carver of inscriptions (8)  
 26 Deferral (12)  
 27 State of health (12)  
 29 Shrub with showy flowers (12)  
 31 Trade-in (4-8)  
 32 Musical production (8)  
 33 Adherent of Islam (6)  
 34 Baffle (7)  
 37 White with anger (12)  
 39 Dairy (8)  
 40 Caricature (7)  
 44 Shrewd (6)  
 45 Foggiest (8)  
 49 Fancy oneself ill (12)  
 51 Sample of public attitudes (7,4)  
 54 Augury (10)  
 55 Play characterised by extravagant action and emotion (9)  
 57 Device for adjusting pitch of string (6,3)  
 58 Ruler (8)  
 59 On next page (8)  
 60 Offer of marriage (8)  
 63 Hot dishes? (7)  
 66 Coming into being (7)  
 67 Disappear (6)  
 68 Part of speech (6)  
 70 Killed (poetic) (5)  
 72 Season of fasting (4)

#### WIN

#### The Shorter Oxford Dictionary HOW TO ENTER

The sender of the first correct cryptic solution and the first correct concise solution will each win a thumb indexed edition of The Shorter Oxford Dictionary in two volumes. The first five cryptic runners-up will each win The Oxford Guide to Writing and Speaking and the first five concise runners-up will each win a copy of the New Oxford Thesaurus. Mark your entries "Concise Jumbo" or "Cryptic Jumbo" and send them to PO Box 4015, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Entries should arrive by noon on Thursday 11 June. Solutions and winners' names will appear on Saturday 13 June.



Where shall we walk tomorrow?" asked one of a group of hikers. "Skiddaw," announced a friend in the sort of hushed tone more properly reserved for K2 than for England's fourth highest mountain. This conversation, overheard in Bertram's restaurant in Ambleside, captures much of the awe that surrounds the Lake District's peaks.

However, while it is wise to heed the official line that you need a map, a good weather forecast, a compass and warm clothes even in summer to walk in the Lakes' higher regions, there is some nonsense put about with regard to the technical difficulty involved. Just as it would be misleading to say that anyone can walk up Scafell Pike on a pre-breakfast leg-stretcher, it is equally wrong to assume that you require some kind of Chris Bonington chromosome.

During a week's holiday we climbed three of England's four highest mountains - Scafell Pike, Helvellyn and Skiddaw - along with one of the most trampled, the Old Man of Coniston. The first two have their hair-raising moments; the last pair are straightforward ascents. Don't be discouraged; our most pleasant surprise was that the walking got easier as the week wore on.

Despite its height, Skiddaw is a baby. We started climbing steeply from a car park near Applethwaite and just kept going until, two hours later, we reached the top. The contrast in scenery is astonishing. To the west and the south around Keswick are beautiful valleys such as Borrowdale, looking as though they are freshly moulded. To the east are the sweeping flanks of Blencathra, resembling a high moor rather than a mountain. As the hills roll northwards, the furze between them looks like vast brown tributaries of a great river.

Scafell Pike, England's highest peak at 3,210ft, is a different proposition. We chose the ascent from Great Langdale in the east, an 11-mile, seven-hour return trip. Setting off from the Old

Dungeon Ghyll hotel, we walked two miles along the valley with the Langdale Pikes far above us before climbing out of an apparent cul-de-sac via Rossett Gill. This steep and stony path was described by the Lakes' greatest authority, Arthur Wainwright, as the "least-liked" pass in the area.

We were now in a different, grassless world, 2,000ft above the valley floor. An array of peaks surrounded us. Which one was Scafell Pike? we wondered. The answer, much to our despair, was none of them. The hardest part of this walk is more emotional than physical: the summit does not come into view until the last half mile and there were still two swishy and stony descents to negotiate, with the threatening shape

of the appropriately-named Ill Crag to darken our mood further.

One pleasure of walking is greeting strangers in a way that would get you locked up if you did it on your regular journey to work. However, we noticed that one species of walker offers no such warmth. Usually male, they are distinguished by action trousers with multiple pockets, gaiters, beards and pipes. Perhaps they wish to give the impression that such puffing walks are way, way below their capacity; they would far rather be in a remote region of Nepal.

Things were more friendly on Helvellyn, an altogether prettier walk. We began in Glenridding on a nine-mile, six-hour route from the back of the village first leading to Lanty's Tarn with

a view over Ullswater which, surrounded by trees, looked like the lake into Narnia in *The Magician's Nephew*.

The next uphill trawl was made easier by the delightful names on our OS map, including Dollywagon Pike and the Hole in the Wall, a stile where the summit is first viewed.

A walk along Striding Edge, a 6-ft wide plinth of stone, is one of the most thrilling experiences in the Lakes. However, little is made of the final ascent, a 50-metre scramble where we felt like Spiderman, gripping rocks to haul ourselves up. As we drew our breath, we studied a monument showing that there is an easier way up; in 1926, it is claimed, a light aircraft managed to land on the summit.

*The walks up Helvellyn, Coniston and Skiddaw are described in the Ordnance Survey Lake District pathfinder series. For the Langdale assault on Scafell Pike, Wainwright's "The Southern Fells" remains unbeatable; the author's gentle wit does not fail even at times of exhaustion. Ambleside Tourist Information Centre, 01539 43245.*

## What, when, where ...

Come Martin in Devon will celebrate this weekend with an annual treat. A bizarre masked figure wearing a necklace of biscuits will be hunted, paraded backwards on a donkey, and symbolically shot and drowned to general village merriment. This is known as the Hunting of the Earl of Rone, and is believed either to be the re-enactment of the capture of a shipwrecked Irish rebel (the Earl of Tyrone), or to have earlier, pagan origins, when a wild man of the woods was hunted and ritually sacrificed. Participants at the event keep up their strength by eating a giant strawberry cake and visiting various pubs, including the 200-year-old Pack o' Cards, which was built with the winnings from a game of cards and represents the diners' favourite pastime.

*This weekend and Bank Holiday Monday at Combe Martin, Devon. Saturday, 8pm: dance to the Earl of Rone Band at the Town Hall. Sunday, 2.30pm: procession on the beach. Monday, 8pm: the Earl is hunted in Lady's Wood and taken through the village. Earl of Rone Society, 01271 882534.*

Sally Kindberg



## A hoedown for city slickers

Farmers all over England are opening their gates to visitors this weekend in what the National Farmers Union has billed as a major attempt by the country to explain itself to the town. Yet on many farms itinerant humans already produce at least as much revenue as wheat, barley or cattle.

At Oldown Country Park, just north of Bristol, the owner, Robert Bernays, reckons that nearly 60 per cent of his income comes from tourists. His main innovation this season is a museum depicting 5,000 years of farming history, but he and his wife Alison first solicited visitors as far back as 1980.

Their earliest venture was into pick-your-own raspberries. Later they started a restaurant, then a farm shop. The next step was to open their ancient woodland, and finally they made part of the farm itself available for tours. Today the various attractions bring in more than 100,000 people a year.

Oldown has an unusual history. The present house was built in the 1840s, and advertised as being ideal "for a

gentleman's residence". But in 1952 the house burnt down, and when Mr Bernays bought the property in 1962, he acquired "a huge white elephant, the shell of a Victorian mansion", with decaying ancillary buildings.

Having rebuilt the house to about a third of its former size, he took pleasure in finding uses for all the out-buildings as he restored them. The place now has a bustling, busy air. Pick-your-own is still on the agenda, but it has become an occupation chiefly for the elderly and although the farm grows a lot of fruit, most of it is sold through the shop.

It is in activities for children that Oldown scores most highly. School visits to the farm often have a startling effect on youngsters from city centres. "We get children who've never been outside Bristol," says Mr Bernays, and a third some of them are really scared by the space."

It is the eight-year-old bullies, fearing little thugs on their own territories, who cling most tightly to teacher. But even if they consider it beneath them to bottle-feed a lamb, cuddle a goat or drive a miniature fork-lift truck, they can let off steam in the splendid assault course laid out in the wood. Rope bridges over ravines, net walls, a fireman's pole for swift descents out of a tree, a 30-metre foxhole tunnel snaking downhill through brambles - there is plenty of physical challenge.

The wood, which covers 80 acres, is large enough to seem a jungle. Among the trees the walls of a medieval vineyard are still visible. On a mound the remains of an iron-age fort command the Severn vale. The fort features strongly in the

new museum, which explains (among much else) how the farmers of 500BC collected bog iron from the swamps by the river and smelted it over fires blown by goatskin bellows. The exhibits include Roman and medieval coins, musket balls and a section from the trunk of an ancient tree, with markers pointing out the rings that grew in the years of significant historical events.

Between the world wars many city families used to stay with relatives on a farm in the summer holidays. Today such opportunities have largely disappeared, and Mr Bernays' aim is to offer latter-day children a sniff of their predecessors' experience.

"Many children have never even touched an animal," he says. "Arriving here can be quite traumatic - but at least, after two or three hours, they're not frightened of sheep any more."

*Oldown Country Park, Tockington, Bristol BS32 4PG (01454 413605). For other open farms, call 0800 192 192 and ask for your local tourist information office.*

"A dashing major. A married woman. An officer's mess."

THE CLASS OF '68 ALUMNI REUNION AT ST BRITON, TIDEWATER FARM, 1000ft above the sea on the British Coast with a conclusion as often as the classmate

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The do  
MIKE ROWBOTTOM  
SEES THE CUP  
FINAL IN  
BLACK AND  
WHITE TERMS  
British

## The doors slid open and I felt frozen in the path of a tidal wave



MIKE  
ROWBOTTOM  
SEES THE CUP  
FINAL IN  
BLACK AND  
WHITE TERMS

AS MY train stopped at and then pulled away from Farringdon Station's deserted platforms, I thought I must have missed the Cup final rush. There was less than an hour until kick-off and most of the Newcastle and Arsenal supporters, I reckoned, must already be summing themselves in the Wembley concourses, sipping their lager, waving their banners and shouting the odds. Kings Cross-St Pancras. Confusion. Scarves. Noise. It seemed I had reckoned wrong.

There was a brief moment before the doors slid open when I felt like someone frozen in the path of a tidal wave. The awesome natural phenomenon of the Toon Army - sipping lager, waving banners,

shouting the odds - was just inches away, and in a few seconds the 1998 FA Cup final experience was about to engulf my quiet world.

The human explosion took place. Suddenly, Newcastle fans were all around me, interpreting the seating arrangements with a freedom and ingenuity I had never previously witnessed. By the time everyone had crammed in, the carriage looked as if it had black and white wallpaper.

"All right, son?" enquired a beaming elderly man, ruffling up my hair. I gave my best impression of a laid-back grin before tugging my bag away from the unwitting trampling it was receiving from the figure who had taken on the role of choir-

master, or master of ceremonies, or chief shouter. "Too Narmy! Too Narmy!" As the cry was taken up, the noise level rose to ear-bursting, disco proportions. In front of me stood a young man holding two cans, an opened one stacked on top of an unopened reserve. He was smoking - not with LT rule-braving bravado, but a detached appreciation which was only broken when a rumbustious fellow-traveller cawed into him. You could only speculate on what, if any, memories he would have of Newcastle's big match.

We were on our way to Blaydon Races now. I had never previously managed to get the hang of the words of this North-eastern anthem, and as it beamed

around me I tried to make the most of my extended learning opportunity. I can now report that the song starts something like: "Oh, me lads, you should ha' seen us comin'" and includes the line, "Ta see the Blaydon Races". I think.

Baker Street. Amused tourists looked up from their tube maps as our train came to a raucous halt. A young girl moved along the platform taking pictures of the carriage inhabitants, who responded with a range of leers and gestures which would prove amusing or perhaps appalling, upon inspection at the photo counter.

My hair-rustling friend was now hanging out of the window, bellowing his predictions into the darkness of the tunnel. I meanwhile, was working hard on being the man with the black shoulder bag, blue polo shirt and strictly neutral expression. But my position became less easy when someone pulled down the windows of the connecting doors near my seat to reveal a group of Arsenal fans.

Instantly, the opening became the main focus of attention, and the cheerleader began to direct chanting at the uneasy faces in the next carriage, like an officer calling down artillery fire. "Boring, boring Arsenal," was far from the kindest opinion voiced.

Unwisely, one of the Arsenal fans took advantage of a hill in the proceedings to offer a reworking of the Righteous Brothers classic: "We've got

expected opportunity to translate threats into deeds, they paused momentarily, then ran on, barking and snapping.

The chanting continued. Two platforms away, a huge, bare-chested man with a black and white bandanna stepped out of the train and then fell backwards, as if in slow motion, over a floral display. Laughter.

The train was pulling away now. Next stop - Wembley. The supporters began hammering on the walls and roof. And someone, somewhere found the words to bring the whole travelling party together.

"Stand up, if you hate Man U., Stand up, if you hate Man U., Stand up, if you hate Man U., Stand up, if you hate Man U."

## Britons must master learning curve



Henman thinks clay play 'will help on other surfaces' Photograph: Epics

John Roberts explains why many of the world's greatest attacking players have failed to succeed on the clay courts of Roland Garros

PREPARING for his annual dose of frustration at the French Open some years ago, Boris Becker made a trademark dive for a ball on a practice court at Stade Roland Garros in Paris. Rising to his feet, the imposing German began to wipe himself. One side of his body was covered, head to foot, in the dusty red clay. Noticing that he was being observed by a British journalist, Alan Page, Becker turned to him and said: "I'm half a clay court player now, huh?"

Without wishing to act as a top-spin doctor for Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman, your correspondent suggests that while it would be embarrassing for Britain's finest to have their noses rubbed in the Paris clay in the days ahead, the experience need not be disastrous. It has happened to some of the best. Becker numbers among the great attacking players who have been unable to make a lasting impression on the slowest of the four Grand Slam surfaces. John McEnroe capitulated against Ivan Lendl after leading by two sets to love in the 1984 French final. John Newcombe failed to advance beyond the quarter-finals. And Pete Sampras is due to resume his quest to complete his collection of the majors next Monday.

Yesterday's draw made it feasible for Sampras to meet the unseeded Henman in the third round, although the 23 year old from Oxford must first overcome the talented Armenian Sargs Sargsian, ranked No 24, followed by Andrei Medvedev or Andrea Gaudenzi, both of whom are comfortable on clay. Sampras opens against his American compatriot Todd Martin.

Rusedski, seeded No 5, is due to play the Belgian Johan Van Herck, ranked No 97, in the first round, followed by a qualifier. Two Spaniards, Carlos Costa and Carlos Moya, may then lie in wait should Rusedski's groundstrokes continue to support his huge serve. Clay is not noted for yielding to the serve.

The closest Becker came to a triumph at the French Open was in 1989, when he lost in five sets against his Swedish rival Stefan Edberg in the semi-finals. Edberg was unable to capitalise after leading an inspired Michael Chang in the final. Becker, now semi-retired, does not have a clay court singles title to his name even though he spent many of his boyhood days playing on the surface.

Among the exceptions in fairly recent times was Yannick Noah, whose athleticism gained little on Wimbledon's lawns but who maximised his aggressive style to provide a home victory for the French at Roland Garros in 1983, and the Italian Adriano Panatta, who prospered from a spirit of adventure in 1976.

Conversely, some of the most tenacious counter-punchers have fallen short. Jimmy Connors was a semi-finalist on four occasions and Andre Agassi was the runner-up in two consecutive years (Agassi, like Sampras, requires the French for a full set of Grand Slam titles).

Which puts into context Bjorn Borg's astonishing feat in winning the French Open on six occasions, Wimbledon five times consecutively, and linking the titles three times in a row, scarcely pausing for breath between Paris and London SW 19.

British interest may have been revitalised by our men at Wimbledon and elsewhere, but only Fred Perry's footprints would qualify for a walk of fame at the French Open.

Until 1975, the French championships was the only one of the four Grand Slams which was not played on grass. The US Open then switched to clay for a brief period before settling for concrete. The Australian Open followed suit in 1988, leaving Wimbledon as the last oasis.

"Some say that grass is for cows," Rusedski remarked recently. "I guess clay is for making bricks."

The British No 1's joke raises a serious point. Figuratively, the bricks created by working on clay courts represent the physical and mental components of a solid all-round game.

Although the red clay of Stade Roland Garros, and elsewhere in European tennis, may signify danger for British players, whose style is better suited traditionally to faster courts, the challenge of competing on the *terre battue* (beaten earth) is a healthy one. The bonus of playing on clay is that it fosters patience, strategy, timing, anticipation, swift, intelligent footwork and builds stamina. The benefits of practising and playing on clay tend to be long term, even for those players who endure the indignity of moving from one first-round defeat to another. Playing on clay improves the ability to hit deep, consistent groundstrokes, promotes confidence when engaged in lengthy rallies, and encourages the use of the lob and the drop-shot.

Only a few years ago, before Rusedski arrived from Canada and Henman began to develop towards his potential, it was a rarity for British men to be ranked high enough to gain direct entry to the top level ATP Tour events on any surface. The fact that they are doing the rounds of the mainstream clay-court circuit at all is a step forward.

Sensibly absorbing the setbacks as part of the learning process (and at times they have seemed uncertain whether to serve and volley or pitch and putt), they have expressed a determination not to confuse unease about the surface with a basic failure to convert opportunities.

Asked if he was inhibited about using a top-spin backhand as a variation to the slice, Rusedski said: "In practice I've been hitting it really well. I just have to set my mind. You mustn't have that indecision in your mind, no matter what standard you are."

Henman, while acknowledging that playing on clay is second nature to many opponents, endeavours to view his matches as further education. "I know it will help me much more on other surfaces," he said.

Personal experience at the Italian Open that the Chilean Marcelo Rios is as brilliant on clay as he was on concrete at the Lipton Championships in Florida did not drive Henman off his "learning curve".

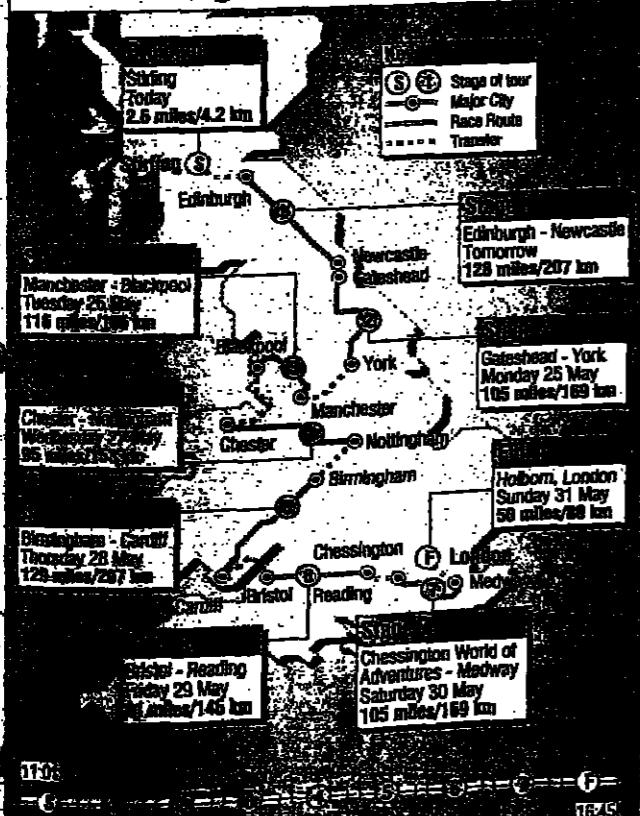
"Realistically," Rusedski said, "I haven't done that well on clay in the past, so it's just another challenge. It's part of being a tennis player. I'm hitting the ball well on the clay. Now it's just a case of turning it into the matches. I'm just learning how to do it. If I can do it, then victories will come. If I can't, there's always the nice grass!"



Rusedski: 'I haven't done well on clay in the past' Photograph: PA

## Fatigue floors Boardman's hopes in the race to be red

### The nine stages of the Prutour



AFTER playing away for the past five seasons, Chris Boardman is set to enjoy home advantage in the Prutour round Britain race, which starts in Stirling today.

Boardman, who rides for the French Gan team, plies his trade throughout continental Europe, but rarely in Britain. His last stage race appearance on home roads was in 1994 when the Tour de France roared through Kent, Sussex and Hampshire.

Boardman, the world hour record holder on the track and rarely defeated in road time trials, should be relishing the nine-day tour which is being contested by 18 teams from a dozen nations.

Last November, still basking in the glow of his prologue win in the Tour de France, he declared overall victory in the Prutour was a prime target for 1998. However, on the eve of the race his words came back to haunt him. "I said that I'd be going for the win and I'd dearly love it to happen, but the reality is my form isn't up to it," he said. "I've got very tired very quickly and I don't know why."

Britain's first national cycling tour for four years starts today. Martin Ayres reports

Boardman has changed his training methods without any apparent effect, and is now awaiting the results of blood tests that he hopes will pinpoint the cause.

He still clings to the belief that he can win today's time trial, a 2.6-mile sprint through the streets of Stirling. "The best I can hope for is to take the leader's jersey on day one and hold it for a few stages, then it could pass to one of my team-mates who can go for the overall win," he said.

Boardman reckons the Australian Stuart O'Grady is Gan's best bet for overall success. Like Boardman, O'Grady is a former world track champion, but unlike his leader he collected several top-10 placings in the spring classics.

Another Australian, Neil Stephens, leads France's Festina squad. Stephens, a stage winner in the 1997 Tour de France, raced in Britain as a young professional before mak-

ing the big time in Europe. At 34, he is approaching retirement and a win in Britain would put a gloss on his last season.

The other world figure in the 108-man peloton is Russia's Viatcheslav Ekimov, who has been in the top 10 of the international rankings throughout the 1990s.

Ekimov leads US Postal, one of the few teams to complete last year's Tour de France without losing a rider.

Despite the paltry £100,000 prize fund, the quality of the Prutour field has fallen some way short of the organisers' high ambitions. Britain last staged a national tour in 1994, and the new event had to elbow its way into a crowded international calendar. A clash with the Giro d'Italia has not helped, but sponsors Prudential plan a long-term involvement and a successful inaugural event should ensure more favourable dates next year.

A hilly route and long, daily

mileages mean that the accent will be on endurance - only two of the eight stages are shorter than 100 miles. The race takes in every range of hills in Britain, from the Cheviots via the Pennines and Welsh valleys to the North Downs.

The manager, Keith Lambert, who will be directing the Brite Voice Systems team, reckons stage five, 129 miles from Birmingham to Cardiff, will be crucial. Riders will be softened up by the Malvern Hills and rolling Herefordshire roads before being hit by a double whammy in south Wales, where they tackle the "Tumble" climb at Abergavenny and Caerphilly Mountain in quick succession.

"The race won't be all over by Cardiff, but anyone with hopes of overall victory will need to be in touch with the leaders at that point," Lambert said.

Although the Prutour is modelled on the Tour de France, it is departing from tradition by insisting - in deference to the sponsor - that the leader wears a red jersey rather than yellow, making it one event in which everybody wants to finish in the red.

### How the top 10 teams line up

#### CANADA (CN)

Former No 2 team fields one Briton, a Swede, a German, two Australians and an Italian, but no French rider. With Chris Boardman playing down his chances, Australia's Stuart O'Grady could step into the breach. New Swede signing Magnus Backstedt improved in April with a seventh place in the Madison World Cup.

#### AUSTRALIA (PA)

Another Neil Stephens, this time in the Pro League, is the 38-year-old ex-Tour de France leader, to replace the injured Scott Gamble. Although refined from international racing, Stephens is still fit enough to reign as national 50-mile champion.

#### IRELAND (IRL)

Chris Llywelyn won the MS Race back in 1996 and prides himself on his team's high morale. The team includes Paul McNamee, Paul Power and Peter Power. This month, consistent Kevin Desir is the team's best hope for a high overall spot. Nick Craig, Britain's mountain bike champion, makes a temporary switch from mud to road.

#### SCOTLAND (SC)

Twice national road champion, Brian Smith, is hoping a return to the saddle will bring him success. Scottish squad formed with the Commonwealth Games as its main target. Scotland's No 2 is pedalling postman Drew Wilson, who insists that win or lose this is definitely his last year at 31.

#### WALES (W)

Julian Winn has made a successful switch from mountain biking to road racing, with top-10 placings in international tours over the last two years. National selection policy is all-inclusive, which explains the English accents of Simon Bayley and David Reed.

Haydock

**HYPERION**  
2.00 Crowded Avenue 4.00 Volontiers  
2.30 Fizzed 4.30 Karisal  
3.00 Colleville 5.06 CAMPASPE (nap)

**GOING:** Good (Good to Firm in back straight).  
DRAW ADVANTAGE: High for 5 to 6; Low from 7 to 10 to 14.

Left-hand course.

Course is near junction of A590 and M6. Newton station 2m. ADMISSION: County Stand £7; Tattersalls 10-11; Newton Stand £5 (OPPs half-price in Tattersalls and Newton Stand). CAR PARK Free.

LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: J Dunlop 23 winners from 193 runners (success rate 12.0%). M McReavy 14 (8%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: Pet Eddy 22 winners from 75 rides (success rate 29.3%). J Cawley 19 winners from 194 rides (success rate 10%). J Quinn 13 (9%). D Holland 6.5-7 (10%).

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Jay Gee (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**2.00 BE FRIENDLY HANDICAP (CLASS B) BBC1 £12,250 added 5f**

**RATINGS:** 1 0004 TADEO (10) (D) R Good M Johnson 5 10. ... D McKeown 8 107  
2 0025 CROWDED AVENUE (10) (D) (7) W Waller P Martin 6 12. ... Pet Eddy 7 104  
3 3028 THE FOX (10) (D) (3) W McGehee B McGehee 4 12. ... J Quinn 4 98  
4 3403 BLESSINGBIRD (10) (D) (A) Good M Johnson 5 10. ... T Quinn 2 104

5 0005 PUDD'S PET (10) (D) (A) (Good) M Johnson 4 9.5. ... T Quinn 2 104  
6 0040 WEST COURT MAGIC (10) (D) (Good) M W Esbary 5 7.7. ... L Charnock 3 107  
7 0363 LAMARIA (10) (D) (Good) M La Trobe J Eustace 4 8.4. ... T Quinn 2 104

8 2104 SWING (7) (C) (Good) T Evans P Evans 4 9.2. ... D McGehee 8 104  
9 0244 ARABELLIA (10) (D) (Good) J Barry 8 11. ... D Holland 8 104

- declared -

BETTING: 5/4 Volontiers, 4-1 Tadeo, 1-1 Crowded Avenue, Westcourt Magic, 1-1 Lamaria, 9-1 Swing, 1-1 ArABELLIA.

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Jay Gee (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: ONLY FOR GOLD**

**3.00 TOTE CREDIT SILVER BOWL HANDICAP BBC1 (CLASS B) £50,000 added 3YO 1m 30yds**

**RATINGS:** 1 591-1 FLORAZI (20) (D) P McGehee J Dunlop 7.5. ... Pet Eddy 8 128  
2 23-10 TIMEKEEPER (18) (D) (3) M Waller B McGehee 5 11. ... D McGehee 8 102  
3 18-5 JACK CLUB (18) (D) (C) S McGehee P Cole 8.5. ... J Quinn 4 107  
4 20-10 LUCASIAN (18) (D) (Good) M Johnson 5 10. ... T Quinn 2 104  
5 0005 PUDD'S PET (10) (D) (Good) M Johnson 5 10. ... T Quinn 2 104  
6 0205 PREMIUM PURSUIT (7) (D) (Good) P Folley 7 10. ... F Quinn 10 102  
7 0001-03 PANAMA HOUSE (10) (D) (Good) T Eustace 7 12. ... L Charnock 2 103  
8 5-165 GORGEOUS GLASSY (10) (D) (Good) J Barry 8 11. ... R Holland 8 104  
9 0221 FRENCH CONNECTION (10) (D) (Good) J Barry 7 12. ... P Folley 7 107

- declared -

BETTING: 5/4 Lucyas Indigo, 11-1 Florazi, 11-2 Tom Dugdale, 10-1 Lamaria, 10-1 Tadeo, 10-1 ArABELLIA, 10-1 Crowded Avenue, Westcourt Magic, 10-1 Swing, 10-1 ArABELLIA.

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Jay Gee (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**2.30 SANDY LANE RATED HANDICAP (LISTED RACE) (CLASS A) £20,000 added 3YO 5f**

**RATINGS:** 1 21-04 JAMY TOO (8) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.7. ... J Quinn 7 10  
2 43-05 BODYGUARD (8) (D) (Good) P Folley 9.5. ... T Quinn 3 V 10

- declared -

BETTING: 5/4 ArABELLIA, 3-1 Lamaria, 4-1 Tadeo, 4-1 Bodyguard, 4-1 T Quinn, 4-1 T Quinn.

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**3.05 KEMPTON**

**HYPERION**  
1.55 Zante 4.05 Premier Night (nb)  
2.30 Asley 4.35 Jayannpee  
3.05 Madimeo 5.10 Truscott

**GOING:** Good (Good on straight course).

**STAFFS:** Straight course - stands side; remainder - inside.

**DRAW ADVANTAGE:** Low for 5 & 6; High for 7 (Round course).

REACROSS on A506 at Sunbury. Bus link from Richmond Underground station. Kempton Park railway station adjacent the course. 1m 10s (1m 22s) to 25-year-old (1m 22s).

LEADING TRAINERS: R Johnson 31 winners from 238 runners (success rate 13%). M Steele 16-17 (18%). J Dunlop 17 (14%). P Cole 16 (13%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: J. Dunlop 27 winners from 146 rides (18%), P Cole 17 (15%).

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**1.55 CALIFORNIAN MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (DIV I) £5,000 added 3YO 1m**

**RATINGS:** 1 5 ALL FFF (10) (D) (Good) P Folley 9.0. ... R Holland 5 10  
2 0005 ELEGANT (10) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 108  
3 22-3 LELAUBER (21) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 108  
4 42-0 GOLDFAME (10) (D) (Good) W O'Connor 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 108  
5 0005 KING LION (7) (A) (Good) J Armstrong 9.0. ... G Carter 9 108  
6 0005 THAT'S LIFE (7) (C) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... G Carter 9 108  
7 0005 TURBO (10) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... G Carter 9 108  
8 0005 KRISTO (7) (A) (Good) 9.0. ... S Sanders 3 108  
9 0005 PORTENT (Hammond Stud) Lady Hercules 8.9. ... A Clark 6 108  
10 0005 ZANTE (K) (A) (Good) 9.0. ... D Williams 3 108  
11 0005 ZANTE (K) (A) (Good) 9.0. ... D Williams 3 108

- declared -

BETTING: 5/4 Lucyas Indigo, 11-1 Florazi, 11-2 Tom Dugdale, 10-1 Lamaria, 10-1 Asley, 10-1 Madimeo, 10-1 Truscott.

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**2.30 NEW ENGLAND CONDITIONS STAKES (CLASS C) £5,000 added 2YO 6f**

**RATINGS:** 1 03 CHAMPAGNE RIDER (10) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Holland 5 10  
2 01 KING FOLEY (10) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... D McGehee 7 107  
3 0005 DIAMOND GEEZER (7) (D) (Good) J Quinn 8 10. ... W O'Connor 7 107  
4 ASLEY (Sheik Mohammed) J Godwin 9.0. ... T Quinn 8 107  
5 0005 PEG DE PROFONDE (Captain Francis Burrey) M Blanchard 8.7. ... R Quinn 8 107  
6 0005 SAILING SPICES (John Codd) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 107  
7 0005 TURBO (10) (D) (Good) P Cole 8 107

- declared -

BETTING: 5/4 Champagne Rider, 5-2 Diamond Geezer, 11-2 King Foley, 13-2 Asley, 10-1 Sailing Spices, 12-1 Turbo.

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**3.05 SYDNEY HANDICAP (CLASS C) £8,000 added 1m 2f**

**RATINGS:** 1 5055 SONG OF FREEDOM (25) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 7 108  
2 5030 LORD EUCLID (25) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 7 108  
3 5005 WINDIN (4) (D) (Good) W O'Connor 9.0. ... R Quinn 7 108  
4 5-165 HERR TRIGGER (44) (D) (Good) S McGehee Dr St Jorg 7 108

- declared -

BETTING: 5/4 Flamingo, 5-1 Song of Freedom, 5-1 Lord Euclid, 5-1 Herr Trigger.

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**3.05 KEMPTON**

**HYPERION**  
1.55 Zante 4.05 Premier Night (nb)  
2.30 Asley 4.35 Jayannpee  
3.05 Madimeo 5.10 Truscott

**GOING:** Good (Good on straight course).

**STAFFS:** Straight course - stands side; remainder - inside.

**DRAW ADVANTAGE:** Low for 5 & 6; High for 7 (Round course).

REACROSS on A506 at Sunbury. Bus link from Richmond Underground station. Kempton Park railway station adjacent the course. 1m 10s (1m 22s) to 25-year-old (1m 22s).

LEADING TRAINERS: R Johnson 31 winners from 238 runners (success rate 13%). M Steele 16-17 (18%). J Dunlop 17 (14%). P Cole 16 (13%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: J. Dunlop 27 winners from 146 rides (18%), P Cole 17 (15%).

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**3.15 CALIFORNIAN MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (DIV I) £5,000 added 3YO 1m**

**RATINGS:** 1 5 ALL FFF (10) (D) (Good) P Folley 9.0. ... R Holland 5 10  
2 0005 ELEGANT (10) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 108  
3 22-3 LELAUBER (21) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 108  
4 42-0 GOLDFAME (10) (D) (Good) W O'Connor 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 108  
5 0005 KING LION (7) (A) (Good) J Armstrong 9.0. ... G Carter 9 108  
6 0005 THAT'S LIFE (7) (C) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... G Carter 9 108  
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8 0005 ZANTE (K) (A) (Good) 9.0. ... S Sanders 3 108  
9 0005 ZANTE (K) (A) (Good) 9.0. ... D Williams 3 108  
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- declared -

BETTING: 5/4 Lucyas Indigo, 11-1 Florazi, 11-2 Tom Dugdale, 10-1 Lamaria, 10-1 Asley, 10-1 Madimeo, 10-1 Truscott.

FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**3.15 CALIFORNIAN MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (DIV I) £5,000 added 3YO 1m**

**RATINGS:** 1 5 ALL FFF (10) (D) (Good) P Folley 9.0. ... R Holland 5 10  
2 0005 ELEGANT (10) (D) (Good) M Johnson 9.0. ... R Quinn 8 108  
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- declared -

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FAVOURITES: 166 wins from 568 runs (success rate 34.4%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Lucyas Indigo (2/3), Bodyguard (napred), 2/3.

**Selection: BLESSINGBIRD**

**3.15 CALIFORNIAN MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (**

# Savill a prickly preacher for turf

IT WAS rather a shame that John Wakeham could not cut it as chairman of the British Horseracing Board. The good Lord had the perfect surname when you consider what needs to happen to racing's top brass.

The rousing now is to be done by Peter Savill, businessman, racehorse owner, Wakeham's son, and the description he won't tolerate, Cayman Islands-based tax exile.

For one, the new chairman of the BHB has been based in Ireland for the last two years. He and his wife, Ruth, have a young son and are expecting an addition to the string. "And I've never been a tax exile," he says. "I've made all my money living abroad. I left England without a penny in my pocket and developed businesses in the Caribbean, America and South America. A true tax exile is someone who makes their money here and then moves abroad." So there you go.

Peter David Savill will concede however that he is a 50-year-old Yorkshireman, a Catholic by upbringing and education. And Savill should recognise much of the machinery around him in his new posting as his father, Harry, used to be an antiques dealer. His son's task is to blow away all the archaic thinking associated with high office in the turf. He could also do with removing the farcical memory of his election, which was deemed unanimous even though several Board

Richard Edmondson talks to the upbeat new leader of Britain's racing industry

members would happily have chased him out of the office with a carving knife. And there is still the other memory of Wakeham's reign, which, in reality, was more of a shower.

Peter John did not have much time, on several levels, for racing and its participants. His main preoccupation each morning seemed to be remembering if he had packed all the lunchboxes needed for his myriad of occupations. Savill did not like him and the feeling was mutual.

Their conflict saw one supplant the other and reinforced Savill's reputation as an uncompromising, ruthless figure.

This, however, is not a description the man himself recognises. "If I've received that reputation it would be from my battles with Wakeham over the financial plan and before that," he says. "I felt I was responding to an unnecessary attitude towards me. But then if I think things are wrong I'm not frightened to stand up and say so. I hope I would always use arguments rather than hide behind issues of personality. Hopefully anyone who has leadership potential knows their own mind."

Ah, the financial plan. This is the commandment which may have been delivered on tablet to Savill on Mount Sinai. It is the document he expects to save racing.

Savill's plan, put simply, deems that racing needs an extra £105m a year to remain competitive. About £25m of that, he says, can come from self-help, but the other £80m needs to be provided by government. He doesn't mind how they do it — they can return more betting turnover to the sport or tell the bookmakers to provide some folding stuff rather than the sofa change they do at the moment. Just as long as they do it.

Savill himself does not pay tax in this country, and he sees no embarrassment in getting into the queue at the Treasury on behalf of impoverished racehorse owners alongside an exhausted junior doctor and a single mum with a babe in swaddling clothes.

Many of the plan's sums are based on other racing nations where prize-money is more plentiful. There are comparisons with France, the United States and Japan, where owning racehorses is almost better than having a job.

Savill, though, does seem to get things done. He made a fortune out of those magazines you find on cruise ships, in hotels and next to the sickbay in the aircraft seat pouch. His personal wealth is estimated at £40m.

This week, one of his smaller fans, Matthew McCloy, resigned from the BHB. McCloy

has never really recovered from a flight to the Breeders' Cup during which he asked for another vodka and tomato juice and was instead brought a pair of handcuffs to secure him.

After the Bloody Mary came bloody Peter at the BHB, and Savill is already looking like a man whom it is best not to cross.

There are not that many failures on the Savill curriculum vitæ and even if he is publicly upbeat about the prospects for

the financial plan he is also realistic enough to concede that much of it will not happen until towards the end of his four-year tenure.

In addition, he recognises that while his back is being slapped to soreness at the moment, there are several who will effect the same motion with cold steel should he slip. "I have lot to prove to the Board," he says. "When they called me back into the room and offered me the

position I said that I was both grateful for the trust they were putting in me and I was hopeful that I could repay that trust.

"I also said I was well aware that I had a lot to prove to some of them that I was absolutely the right person for the job. I accept there are reservations about whether I can work easily both within and outside the Board.

"I have absolutely no doubts that I can because my business career was built on negotiation.

By definition that means you have to make concessions in certain areas to finish with an agreement. Clearly, though, there are people who still need to be convinced."

It might just have been, of course, that they liked his face. Celtic Swing's owner has the reputation of occasionally being a rather prickly customer with his trainers when he has an opinion on matters equine. But he looks a rather benign character, a

moon face with spectacles lending something of a clerical appearance. Savill, however, is merely a preacher on the turf.

Neither, it must be added, does he have a gong of any distinction or an army career to look back on, and the money in his account is that awful new stuff he's made himself rather than collected from a trust fund. Even if Peter Savill does nothing else, he's done rather well to get this far.

## O'Brien has the power in Empire

By Greg Wood

GOOD vibrations before Istabraq's win in the Champion Hurdle and King Of Kings' success in the 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket, it is hard to see any outcome today but a convincing success for Second Empire. In the 'fillies' Classic, O'Brien is again the man to beat with four runners, and Christy Roche appears to feel that Sharp Catch is the best of them. Her stable-mate Shahtoush was unfortunate to meet Cape Verdi at Newmarket, however, and can find compensation here.

The man who won the first three Classics in Ireland last year saddles firm favourites for both the Irish 1,000 Guineas and 2,000 Guineas this weekend. What is more, the ante-post market on the Derby implies that British trainers may soon appreciate the problems of their Irish counterparts, since Second Empire, O'Brien's main hope for today's colts' Classic on the Curragh, has been backed for Epsom in the last couple of days with a confidence bordering on utter conviction.

A price of 2-1 with a run (Coral) is now the best you will find with the major bookies, although since the minor muscle injury which Second Empire sustained a few weeks ago has now cleared up, it is only the sheer size of O'Brien's possible team for Epsom which is maintaining the "with a run" clause. One way or another, it will surely disappear this afternoon.

Such is the apparent confidence at Ballydoyle about Second Empire's chance today that Victory Note, the French 2,000 Guineas winner who, like Second Empire, is part-owned by John Magnier, will miss the race and head for the St James's Palace Stakes at Royal Ascot.

Since there were similar

good vibrations before Istabraq's win in the Champion Hurdle and King Of Kings' success in the 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket, it is hard to see any outcome today but a convincing success for Second Empire. In the 'fillies' Classic, O'Brien is again the man to beat with four runners, and Christy Roche appears to feel that Sharp Catch is the best of them. Her stable-mate Shahtoush was unfortunate to meet Cape Verdi at Newmarket, however, and can find compensation here.

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In the Heron Stakes at Kempton, Speedfit Too, eighth in the 2,000 Guineas, is probably the form horse, but Raise A King (3.35) should go hot after a fine run in a hot York handicap. PREMIER NIGHT (nap 4.05) is another to have made a promising return, while Marsad (4.35) should make the most of a good draw.

There are several improving performers in the Tote Credit Silver Bowl Handicap at Haydock, but nothing to match Florizel (3.00), the top weight, who appears a Group-class performer in the making. Fizzed (2.30) and Ruff's Pet (2.00) are others at Haydock with every chance at the weights.

Yesterday's results, page 22

### Cartmel

**HYPERION**  
2.20 Stylish Allure 2.50 Appearance Money 3.20  
Snapper 3.50 Woodstock, Wandering 4.25 Gow-  
Savill 4.50 Nikkatsu Nephew

GOING: Good to firm.

● Left-hand course, level course.

● 1m 2f, 1m 6f, 1m 1f, 1m 2f, 1m 3f, 1m 4f.

● LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: Mrs M. R. Heslop 6-2  
50/50, G. Moore 6-2 (5/6), Mrs S. Smith 6-2 (5/6), P. Bowes 6-2 (5/6).

● LEADING JOCKEYS: D. Hobson 10-31 (22/29), P. Johnson 7-14 (5/5), P. McCoy 6-2 (4/2), D. M. Mclachlan 6-2 (2/22).

● FAVOURITES: 7/5-15 (4/7).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

**3.20 MOORGATE RACING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £4,000 2000m 2f 11 10yds**

1. 20223 HOUSE OF DREAMS (G) G Moore 6 2 0 ... Mr J. Heslop ...

2. 24403 NUN VINTAGE (P) D Chapman 7 13 ... W. Worthington

3. 20212 WALKING STICK (P) D Chapman 7 13 ... D. Hobson

4. 20212 WALKING STICK (P) D Chapman 7 13 ... D. Hobson

5. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D Hobson 7 13 ... P. Bowes

6. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D Hobson 7 13 ... P. Bowes

7. 33371 GOING FOR BROKE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

8. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

9. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

10. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

11. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

12. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

13. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

14. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

15. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

16. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

17. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

18. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

19. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

20. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

21. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

22. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

23. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

24. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

25. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

26. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

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28. 20223 SILVERDOLE (P) D. C. Moore 6 10 ... J. Hayes 7

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56. 20223 SIL

# Bristol's decline risks resulting in ultimate fall

After today's Premiership One play-off, Bristol may lose their top-flight status. Chris Hewett reflects on years of turmoil that precipitated the collapse of a once mighty West Country club

IT USED to be known as the "Bristol fashion", a highly marketable brand of designer rugby tailored along classical lines - ugly pack, snappy half-backs, stiletto-sharp finishers out wide - but sufficiently smart and street-sensitive to maintain its balance on the cutting edge of a fast evolving game. Fifteen years on, there is nothing remotely hip about the Bristol club; musty, threadbare and reeking of neglect, it is the Afghan coat of the Allied Dunbar Premiership. And today, it risks being consigned to the wardrobe of history.

If London Scottish successfully defend a four-point lead in the second leg of a nerve-jangling play-off, they will assume Bristol's place in the top drawer of the English game. Had it not been for an isolated and wholly uncharacteristic explosion of pugilistic activity from Derrick Lee, the Exiles' international full-back, the landlord of the Last Chance Saloon would already have called time on his West Country regulars.

Lee's dismissal for knocking David Corkery, the abrasive Irish flanker, into the middle of the next millennium gave the rapidly expiring fallen giants a chunk of fight against which to rage at the Memorial Ground this afternoon. Those who respond emotionally to the grand traditions of the domestic game will rage with them, for Bristol are undeniably a big club with

potential to become the biggest. As Mike Rafter, their cup-winning captain of 1983, said this week: "Without overstating the case, this city is one of the greatest rugby heartlands anywhere in the world."

But Rafter knows better than anyone that it is currently a heartland without a capital. Seldom has a rugby ground been more appropriately named, for "the Mem" is now a 10,000-capacity funeral parlour shrouded in the mists of reminiscence. Indeed, many of those most worthy of fond recall - Alan Morley, Nigel Pomparey, Austin Sheppard, John Doubleday, Peter Pollard, Bob Hesford - still enjoy the odd pint in the lovely old members' bar and their very presence there adds a gut-wrenching poignancy to the painful situation in which the club now finds itself.

For many of the Bristol faithful, one fluffed goal-kick will always symbolise the great and apparently irreversible decline. It was not, to be fair, just any old kick, coming as it did in the last minute of the 1984 cup final, with Bath: had Stuart Barnes, the new boy wonder of English rugby, not allowed the pressure to splinter his usual sang-froid, he would have retained the John Player trophy for his side and, in the view of many romantics, strangled the "Bath era" at birth.

That Barnes would soon

help transform Bath into the greatest club side of them all remains the most bitter of ironies for Bristol and it is perhaps understandable that his name should remain mud on the Memorial Ground terraces. But those who continue to accuse him of calculated disloyalty merely delude themselves. The brutal truth is that Barnes had detected something rotten at the heart of the Bristol committee structure and decided to jump ship before he fell victim to its ravages.

"They were too insular, too narrow-minded for my liking," he once explained. "It seemed to me that those in charge were smug, self-satisfied and wholly lacking in ambition." And so it proved. Comfortable in the knowledge that they had been a major power for almost a century, the girt-and-tonic brigade allowed young, vibrant talents of the calibre of David Sole, David Egerton and Phil de Glanville to slip through the net. They were not Bristol material, apparently.

Over the next decade, they would fail to keep a veritable battalion of prime talents who were considered to consist of precisely the right stuff: Jon Webb, Arwel Thomas, Kyran Bracken, David Hilton, Alan Sharp, Mark Regan, Simon Shaw, Garath Archer, Andy Blackmore, Derek Eves. Every club loses the occasional diamond, but only Bristol can claim to have mislaid an entire mine-load.

Even when the Bristol management - or mismanagement, as they have long been labelled - appeared to be ahead of the game, the consequences were either Fawlty-esque or seriously depressing. Following Northampton's lead in making Barrie Colless their full-time director of rugby, they appointed Colin McFadyean, a former England captain, in 1989. "Sadly," recalls Alistair Hignell, a Bristol international who now broadcasts on the game for the



The Bristol flanker David Corkery confidently wins a line-out ball against Newcastle's Doddie Weir in a rare moment of supremacy during a season of setbacks for the West Country club

Photograph: Mike Egerton/EMPICS

BBC, "he spent the first year without an office. It's hard to connect with the wider rugby world when you don't have a phone."

Rob Cunningham, a knowledgeable but contentious Scot, was next up and, helped by the late Elwyn Price's uttering eye for rugby talent, he began to piece together a side worthy of its traditions. Like Barnes before him, he identified deep-seated problems at committee level. Unlike Barnes, he decided

to tackle those problems directly at the source. Within days, he had been expelled from the club and the nasty, hole-in-the-corner manner in which the deed was done left an indelible stain on Bristol's birthright spotless reputation for fair play.

Both Brian Hanlon, an enthusiastic if inexperienced New Zealander, and Alan Davies, a coach of national standing laughably appointed on a part-time basis, attempted to square

the circle, but with no major backer to underwrite a meaningful excursion into the market place, they knew they were firing cap guns at the moon. Bristol have been in deep doo-dooes with the bank ever since they built their Centenary Stand at the height of the late-80s recession - it proved a financial albatross of pterodactyl proportions - and today's game will be played at a stadium that is very much in hock.

No one, least of all those

players who were taken to the cleaners for an hour or more by London Scottish last Sunday, is remotely confident that the will to win still exists.

"This is a one-off and it will take blood, sweat, snot and tears to pull through," said Rafter, whose playing days were defined by epic spillages of the first two of those commodities. "I hope we've still got it in us because if we haven't, we'll be on a slippery slope to nowhere."

## Andrew to step aside for prodigy

By Chris Hewett

JONNY WILKINSON'S reputation precedes him by such a distance that it is difficult to locate the player himself without the aid of a telescope, but Newcastle's teenage prodigy is expected to appear in full view in the Sanjo Cup at Twickenham today.

The newly crowned Premiership champions are preparing to give the 18-year-old midfielder a first senior start at outside-half, the position he seems destined to fill for England during this summer's southern hemisphere tour.

Wilkinson has spent all season understudying Rob Andrew, the Falcons' director of rugby, although he progressed sufficiently to force a place in centre during the latter stages of the title run-in. Yesterday, however, Andrew hinted that he would step aside for at least some of the match against Philippe Sella's World XV.

It should ensure a flicker of genuine interest in what has been dismissed as a meaningless and unnecessary addition to the longest domestic campaign in the history of English rugby. Neither Leicester nor Wasps managed to prevail against their scratch opponents in the previous two matches, probably because they were in the advanced stages of exhaustion. Resilient as they may be, Newcastle may well find their task equally thankless this afternoon.

The most serious business of the day takes place 100 or so miles to the west, where Bristol attempt to protect their top-flight status from the hungry wannabes of London Scottish. The Exiles won last Sunday's first leg 29-25 and might easily have done better still; certainly, John Steele, their coach, fancies his side's chances of a repeat performance.

"We played much the better rugby on Sunday and while the slate has been wiped clean for this game, we'll be looking to play at pace and put a number of scores past them once more," he said.

Iain McCausland, the Australian Under-21 international, replaces Derrick Lee at full-back. Lee was sent off for punching in the opening encounter and, ironically, is now in Australia with the Scottish Test party. Bristol, meanwhile, may discipline their unsettled England tourist, the utility back Josh Lewsey, for declaring himself unavailable for play-off duty. Lewsey cited pressure of exams, but his club consider him in breach of contract.

The Wasps lock Simon Shaw is the latest player to pull out of England's tour to Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Shaw, who had to withdraw on medical grounds, is replaced by Gloucester's uncapped lock Dave Sims. England now have 19 uncapped players in their 37-man squad.

Awful, depressing and upsetting: Bristol players of the past fear for the future

Alistair Hignell

Bristol and England full-back, capped 14 times between 1973 and 1979

"The club has been taken by surprise by every development in the game since the mid-1980s. League rugby crept up on them, Bath emerged as the major West Country power while people at the Memorial Ground were still looking for Gloucestershire in their wing mirrors and the move to full professionalism caught them cold. There has always been this idea that having established themselves as a

great club, things would automatically tick over. Even now, I hear people saying: 'Don't worry, it will sort itself out.' Sadly, things don't sort themselves out any more. As an objective broadcaster, I can only say that I hope and pray we stay up. I find the thought of relegation too awful to contemplate."

Richard Harding

Bristol and England scrum-half, capped 12 times between 1985 and 1988

"I find the whole situation very sad, very depressing. We inhabi-

a different rugby age now but there has never been a time when a big club did not need to approach things in a professional manner. There has been a lack of vision and, in particular, a misunderstanding of the imperatives of professionalism. It seems to me that the current management, many of whom have been involved for many years, are too parochial in their outlook, too inward-looking and, yes, small-minded. Bath on the other hand, attracted people of huge ability with broad horizons. I don't want to see Bristol relegated, but perhaps it would give the club a chance to start afresh."

Mike Rafter

Bristol and England flanker, capped 17 times between 1977 and 1981

"Like any business, a rugby club is driven by the management, the men at the top, and without naming names, I believe some top-level appointments have been serious misjudgements. There have been some internal wrangles at the Memorial Ground that the club

has, quite literally, taken its eye off the ball. It hurts me to visit the offices and see on the wall a picture of me holding the John Player Cup aloft. Fifteen years ago, there was a huge crescendo of rugby interest in the city and we're in terrible danger of seeing the last remnants of that drift away. There is no simple remedy. There used to be one agenda in rugby, but professionalism has produced millions of different agendas. All I know is that I find the club's current predicament dreadfully upsetting."

## Ebbw Vale confident of a place in history

By Robert Cole

A SEASON of massive discontent for Welsh rugby will finally close at Bristol's Ashton Gate with Ebbw Vale trying to make it a hat-trick of wins over Llanelli to take the Swansea Cup for the first time today.

It is a classic case of the hungry underdogs against the club who have been there, done it all and are expected to win the trophy for the 10th time in 27 years.

But, just as nobody could have predicted the mayhem the game in Wales has had to suf-

fer since the season kicked-off on 16 August, so picking a winner in the final is a difficult task.

One of the biggest bonuses for Llanelli should be their experience, yet only five of their side have played in a final before - Nigel Davies, Wayne Proctor, Rupert Moon, Neil Boothby and Iwan Jones - and three players have represented Wales this season - Proctor, Boothby and Mike Vyle.

As for Ebbw, they have three players who have reached the final before - Richie Collins, Mark Jones and Jon Funnell -

and three who have played in international rugby this season - the skipper Kingsley Jones for Wales and Siua Taumololo and Kuli Faletau with Tonga.

No wonder, then, that the ebullient Jones believes his side can pick up the biggest prize in their 100-year history. "I don't think there is anything Llanelli can do if we play to our potential. No one can beat Ebbw Vale if we are at our best," he said.

"We've reached the final by beating three Premier Division teams, including both of last season's finalists, and it would be

awful if we threw it all away at the final hurdle. We have taken the tough route to this final and we know that on merit we deserve to win it. The players also know, though, that it is a one-off occasion and we still have to go out and play to our best."

"Every game we have lost this season we deserved to lose. We lost to Cardiff in the League because we thought we had arrived and we went down to Neath because our eyes were on the Cup final. This is no flash in the pan and I don't think there is a danger of us freezing on the big day.

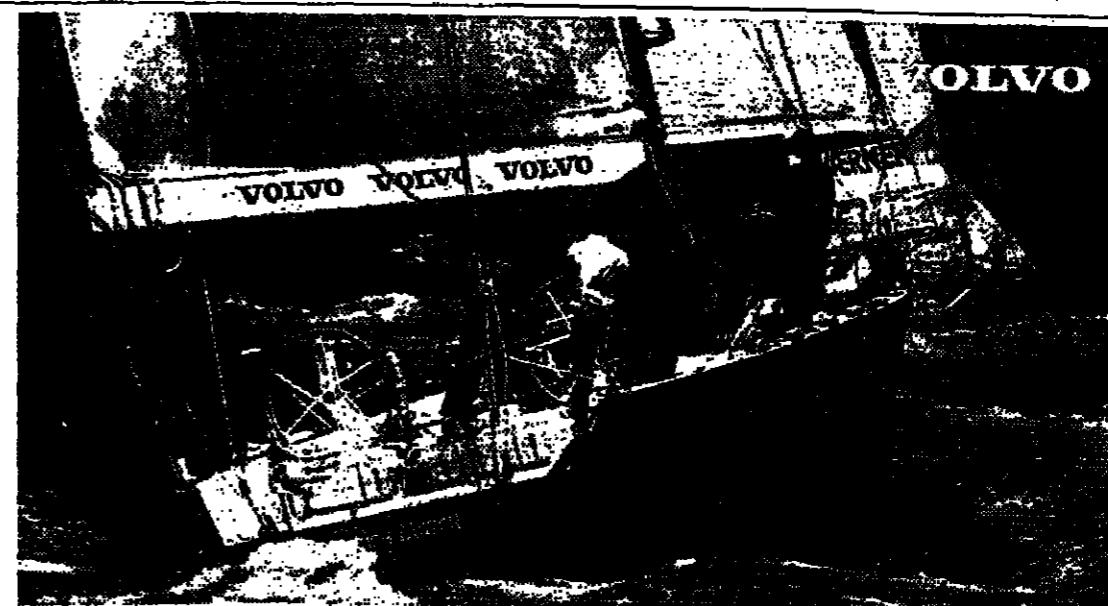
We have experienced players who have figured in Cup finals before, Tongan internationals who have played at Ellis Park and Loftus Versfeld in South Africa and players like myself, Byron Hayward and David Llewellyn who have been involved with Welsh teams this season."

It promises to be an intriguing match, but any feelgood factor promises to be shortlived as tomorrow the 221 Welsh clubs will be attending a Special General Meeting to discuss possibly excluding Cardiff from membership and what shape the lower divisions will take next season.

## TRUST VOLVO TO HANDLE WELL IN THE WET

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## It's all about Wogisation – giving the viewers a warm glow like porridge ads in winter

CHRIS  
MAUME  
SPORT  
ON TV

FOR some reason – I choose not to delve too deeply – I have a fly-paper mind for facts. Useless facts, that is. And as an armchair sports fan, I invariably end up with a reference book of some kind on my knee – *Rothmans, Soccer Who's Who, Sportsman's Almanac, the Manchester United Complete Record*. Sometimes, when provoked into bouts of nostalgia, I even find myself reaching for one of my childhood books like the *International Soccer Yearbook* (Nos 18 through to 25) or my (sadly incomplete) set of the *George Best Annual*, but usually it's a quest for hard facts that gets me going.

There's probably some deep explanation for why information

for its own sake can be so important to some people. A precocious brat, I was told off by Miss Swainson in the third year of primary school for whispering to a class-mate. I was saying to him (and I cringe to think of it), "You know what my favourite word is? Information." I'll just get my anorak.

Watching Arsenal win the FA Cup (ITV) last Saturday, I had been checking whether it was in 1888 or 1889 that Preston became the first club to do the Double. Then, as my eyes strayed over the pages of statistics, that led on to such curiosities as the fact that in the first year of the Cup, 1871-2, Queen's Park couldn't arrange a date with Donington for their

first-round tie, so both advanced to the second round. Or that two years later, because it was difficult for the poor things to travel down from Glasgow, they were given byes until the semi-final against Oxford University – which they also couldn't be bothered turning up for. Why is this interesting to me? I haven't a clue, really.

Sometimes, I have to confess, I miss great swathes of action while I attempt to fix the fielding positions in my head once and for all or look up the goal difference between Italy and England in their qualifying group for the 1978 World Cup. None of this serves any purpose, I think. It must be something to do with facts providing some

sort of bedrock in a godless age. Or that with 974 runs at an average of 139.14, Now I know, and I bet if you ask me in a year's time, I'll still be able to tell you.

It's not as if the hour-long highlights programme wasn't interesting in itself, with England not quite managing to contain a South African side who come on like ersatz Aussies. *Gower's Cricket Monthly* (BBC2), returning for the summer, examined the tourists in its amiable but anodyne way. It was interesting to hear echoes of old attitudes, albeit in the blandest, most inoffensive of fashions. The captain, Hansie Cronje, talked of the fast bowler Makhaya Ntini: "He and Lance Klusener speak Zulu together, so it's irritating to hear them

yapping away in the changing-room." No offence meant, I'm sure, but you wonder how irritated Ntini would be allowed to be with Africans bouncing off the walls.

Mornantai Hayward, on the other hand, is "a very African boy. He's mums. He's as rough as they come, as rough as they come. He's a lovely boy." And what a great name.

Hayward would seem to have his English counterpart in Ed Giddins, back in the fold after 20 months out for cocaine abuse. The lad sounds like a posher version of Nigel Kennedy, all "excellents" and sentences that finish with "...OK?". The cuddly profile set the tone of *Cricket Monthly* – a

## Coulthard safe with McLaren

## Motor racing

By Derrick Altrop  
in Monte Carlo

DAVID COULTHARD leaned back in his chair in an Italian restaurant beneath his apartment here yesterday and saw off the rumours of threats to his job as if they were afters.

Stories of McLaren-Mercedes' intent on luring Michael Schumacher from Ferrari have gathered fresh momentum in the gossip that accompanies the Monaco Grand Prix. Ron Dennis, the McLaren team principal, has been quoted as saying: "When you have a very good car you want the best and Michael is the best."

Coulthard is constantly hearing of approaches for the German, of course, and he has, he claims, been given assurances by Dennis that he need not be worried about his position in the team.

"Ron has told me not to concern myself with the rumours and that is a nice commitment from the man," Coulthard said. "People may say I'm naive but why worry about it? The crunch time will come

in the future. I'll be talking about my contract in the middle of the year and worry about it in the unlikely event that it will be necessary."

Coulthard's team-mate, Mika Hakkinen, is generally perceived to be the favoured son of McLaren, a privileged position that has as much to do with his near-fatal accident at the end of 1995 as his ability or personality. "I've said in the past I felt uncomfortable with Mika's relationship in the team, but I understand that because of all he's been through with the team," Coulthard said. "If I have equal machinery and emotional support, then I'll be happy. Success will help strengthen my relationship in the team and I've no reason to doubt I'll be with the team beyond this year."

Coulthard could suppress the rumours by beating Hakkinen tomorrow and closing the seven-point gap at the top of the championship. He said: "Mika is hungry and fired-up, but I think I can do it. I'm the only driver who has finished all five races and I've been on the front row of the grid for every race."

It can all change in practice today, of course, and Schumacher, ringing every last drop from the Ferrari, could yet defy them all. But so far, Hakkinen is following his home strategy.

"I started this weekend confident," he said. "I just felt good, like I knew what I was doing. I tried to continue from Spain. I had a plan to go with here also and up to now it is going well."

Hakkinen has a poor record here – a sixth place by default is his best result – and had two below-par performances before



Michael Schumacher, a winner in Monte Carlo last year, signs on with his fans in the principality yesterday

Photograph: Steve Mitchell/Empics

Barcelona a fortnight ago. A win here might prove a crushing blow, extending as it would his lead over Coulthard to at least 11pts. And this time home comforts appear to be helping Hakkinen's cause.

He said: "People ask me if it is an advantage that I live here and as far as the driving is concerned it isn't really. You are on another racing track, nothing like Monaco at other times. The fact that you

may be passing your favourite restaurant doesn't matter. But I do feel comfortable here. I am relaxed. I go to my own place and sleep fantastically. I believe it is how I feel that is important to me. If I am in control of my plan, then I do not fear anyone."

"Do not misunderstand me, I'm not saying I'm confident. I'm definitely going to beat David and Michael in the race. I respect them and they're very strong, very dangerous. But I know what I can do. I am working all the time to get the car I want, and that plan is working for me. If I stay focused like this, I have what I need."

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## Daredevil plunge into the 'pipeline'

IT IS the two-wheeled, off-road equivalent of Formula One racing and last weekend it was the turn of a Plymouth park to host the mountain bike World Cup – an eight-round series which had already visited the United States, Portugal, Hungary and Germany.

A sweltering Sunday at Newham Park on the edge of Dartmoor saw 193 male elite category riders, including many British hopefuls, tackle five laps of a gruelling 10-kilometre course consisting of hard climbs across open moorland, fast and narrow descents through woodland trails (complete with emergency padding on some trees), numerous river crossings and the notorious "pipeline" descent. This is a 150ft drop down an extremely steep and rock-strewn bank into a river valley with a tight chicane at the bottom.

The tricky course made for

PHOTOGRAPHS  
BY  
ROBERT  
HALLAM

an excellent spectacle for the 20,000 strong crowd. In the clouds of dust that formed on the pipeline some riders inevitably lost control and ended up parting company with their bikes, while others seemed to glide effortlessly through the chicane and off into the woods.

The riders are all top-level athletes. Years of conditioning, strict diets and a massive lung capacity are coupled with a fierce will to win as the Australian Cadel Evans showed. The women's race was won by Laurence Leboucher, of France. Both riders are expected to compete at the 2000 Olympics.

It certainly was a great day out for the home off-road biking fraternity, who are already looking forward to next year's event.

● Copies of these photographs – and any others by *The Independent's* sports photographers David Ashdown, Peter Jay and Robert Hallam – can be ordered by telephoning 0171-293-2534.

After passing scrutineering (bottom centre), mountain bikers like nothing better than a 10km slog through the heat and dust over rough terrain. A dash through the water splash (top left) comes as a relief, but the steep descents can take their toll, as Peter Edwards found (bottom left).



# Hollooake needs to convince sceptics

By Derek Pringle  
Cricket Correspondent

FOR one man, the result of today's Texaco Trophy match at Old Trafford will have all the importance of a World Cup final. Adam Hollioake may not have sought the one-day captaincy of his country, but you can tell he likes the new uniform. Yet fashion is a fickle thing and unless his team beat South Africa today and get back into the three-match series, he may well find himself wearing civvies to next summer's big event.

But if Graham Gooch and Mike Gatting, both of them former England captains as well as selectors, are believed to favour a single captain – as the initial appointment of Mike Atherton

for

the

one

day

series

in

the

Caribbean

would

suggest

– the

England

coach,

David

Lloyd,

is

clearly

in

the

"two

captains"

camp.

Having been an important part of Hollioake's barnstorming wins in Sharjah, Lloyd feels that the bumpy ride being given to Hollioake, particularly following Thursday's loss, is more than a little unfair.

"I thought Adam had a good game," said Lloyd yesterday. "He played really well with the bat. He's a strapping lad who likes to hit the ball, but

losing four quick wickets forced him to move it around instead.

"He also handled the bowlers well and showed imagination. When certain batters came in, he wasn't afraid to change things immediately. I felt he had bossed the situation and made South Africa work hard for their runs."

Making teams work hard is not the same as winning, which is what England normally do in home one-day series, and what Hollioake needs to convince the sceptics that separate cap-

tains are indeed the way forward.

"I know we are capable of winning the next two games," said Lloyd. "There might be a lot of talk about next year's World Cup, but at the moment the priority is to win this series."

To achieve that, particularly against a side as well drilled as South Africa, England will have to make good the loss of Graham Thorpe, whose bad back has forced him to withdraw from the remaining matches.

Thorpe is a pivotal player,

picking both of them today, and either Alastair Brown or Matthew Fleming could be brought in.

Find out about certain

players is never an easy busi-

ness over a couple of games. The selectors may feel com-

fortable with the spirit of ex-

perimentation extant in this

squad, but if you get the im-

pression that it is a feeling not

shared by Hollioake. As a cap-

tain under scrutiny, he has far

more at stake than the soon-to-

be-forgotten outcome of yet an-

other one-day game.

The women may have to

cope without Karen Brown,

who is a very doubtful start-er

suffering a hand injury

against the Dutch on Thursday.

The only game of direct

British interest yesterday saw

Scotland go down 2-1 to the

USA in their second defeat of

the tournament.

After conceding a penalty

corner goal to Kate Barber in

the second minute, Scotland

struggled to get into their stride

and the Americans claimed a

second through their captain,

Tracey Fuchs, six minutes into

the second half.

The second goal forced the

Scotland coach Mike Gilbert to

change three front-runners,

which brought his side back into

the game.

Scotland then created a series

of chances, with Rhona Simpson

missing several good opportu-

nities before, with 14 minutes to

go, she won a penalty stroke

when obstructed by the goal-

keeper. Sue MacDonald made

no mistake from the spot, but the

Scots did not capitalise on sev-

eral chances to equalise.

The Goalkeeper Tracey

Robb played well, with one out-

standing save from Kelli James,

while Val Neil was the pick of

an often overworked defence.

Gilbert said: "This was a

game we thought we could win.

We had enough chances, cre-

ating a lot of pressure and hav-

ing plenty of possession."

## Brown is doubtful England starter

### Hockey

By Bill Colwill  
in Utrecht

ENGLAND'S World Cup teams spent yesterday preparing for crucial games today, against Argentina for the women, and Pakistan, the defending world champions, for the men.

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## Boon and Clark stay out in front

### Equestrianism

By Genevieve Murphy  
at Windsor

TERRY BOON and Polly

Clark, both aged 24 and fellow

members of the winning British

team in the 1994 European

Young Rider's Championships,

have retained their overnight

leads in the two senior sections

of the Chubb Insurance Wind-

or International Horse Trials.

Both suffered the ignominy

of being eliminated in dressage

tests in 1995 (Clark at Bad-

minster and Boon at Burghley)

but they did everything right on

Thursday and their scores were

not bettered when the dressage

was completed yesterday.

Boon, who won team and in-

dividual gold medals in the Eu-

ropean Young Riders contest of

1993, leads in the major Chubb

Insurance section with Blue

Admiral, whose score of 37.2

penalties gave him a pleasant

surprise. "He doesn't give you

a stunning feel, but he creates

a nice picture and the judges

seem to like him," Boon said of

the nine-year-old grey gelding.

Richard Waygood, who is

equitation warrant officer in

the Household Cavalry, remains

in second place on Crackerjack

III, with Andrew Nicholson, of

New Zealand, moving into third

on King Leo. Nicholson, who

also rides Valhalla IV here, had

been due to do his dressage with

King Leo on Thursday – but he

was allowed to delay his test until

the owners of the horse had

arrived from America to watch

him. The

# Eagles tell Watson to toe line

## Rugby League

By Dave Hadfield

DAVE WATSON is having to work his way back into favour after being left out of Sheffield Eagles' first team as a disciplinary measure.

It is understood that Watson, who has a history of testing his various coaches' patience, missed a training session last week and was left out of the side that won at Salford.

"It's an internal matter," said the Eagles' coach, John Kear. "He's had his wrists slapped and I'm confident he will now toe the line. If not, he'll be out."

The New Zealand international, outstanding for Sheffield in their Challenge Cup final victory three weeks ago, has played twice in the reserves and has put himself in contention for one of the substitute berths against Leeds today.

But, in the continuing absence of DIY accident victim Mark Aston, Kear is sticking with Gareth Stephens and Marcus Vassilakopoulos – both ex-Leeds players – as his starting half-backs. Two other Headingley old boys, Steve Molloy and Darren Turner, will be on the bench, possibly alongside Watson.

Kear, who says that Sheffield are confident of keeping their prop Dale Laughton despite interest from Wigan, correctly predicted that Leeds would beat Wigan last Friday and come to the Don Valley as the Super League leaders.

"Like us, they are the right sort of team to beat Wigan. When the two of us meet, it's an arm-wrestle," Kear added.

## Ketteridge aims to boost medal haul

THE former Castleford forward Martin Ketteridge looks to add another medal to his already impressive collection when his Redhill side tackle Ideal ABI in today's BNFL National Cup final.

Ketteridge was in the Casic side that won the 1986 Challenge Cup and was a runner-up when the West Yorkshire outfit lost to Wigan in 1992. He was also man of the match when the Wheldon Road club shocked Wigan to win the 1994 Regal Trophy, and he is one of the Blues' key players for the final, which is being staged at Featherstone's Post Office Road ground.

Redhill, who have produced Great Britain's coach, Andy Gooday, Daryl Powell and Andy Hay in recent years, beat holders Ellenhborough in the semi-final and are favourites to lift the Silver Jubilee National Cup.

However, Hull-based Ideal ABI have beaten four National Conference sides *en route* to the final and have the veteran half-back pair of Tracy Lazeyns and Terry Smirk masterminding their challenge.

The replacement forward Tony Carroll scored a last-minute try which Darren Lockyer converted after the final siren to give visiting Queensland a dramatic 24-23 win over New

"Any game against Leeds is special for the city of Sheffield – more so when they are top of the table."

It will be special, too, for Daryl Powell, Sheffield's first-ever signing who spent 11 years with the club and is now one of five former Eagles at Headingley. He starts his first game for Leeds today, in place of Marc Glanville, who was concussed against Wigan.

"I think I'll get a good reception, as I always had a rapport with the fans down there," Powell said. "But when you play against old team-mates it's always a bit spicy."

Another in the same situation is Salford's Josh White, who lines up against the London Broncos for the first time tomorrow.

White, who moved north this winter, has consulted a sports psychologist in an attempt to rediscover his early-season form.

In tomorrow's other Super League fixture, Halifax hope to build on last week's excellent win at Bradford when they host St Helens for whom the Great Britain hooker, Keiron Cunningham, makes his first start of the season.

● Salford Reds have signed

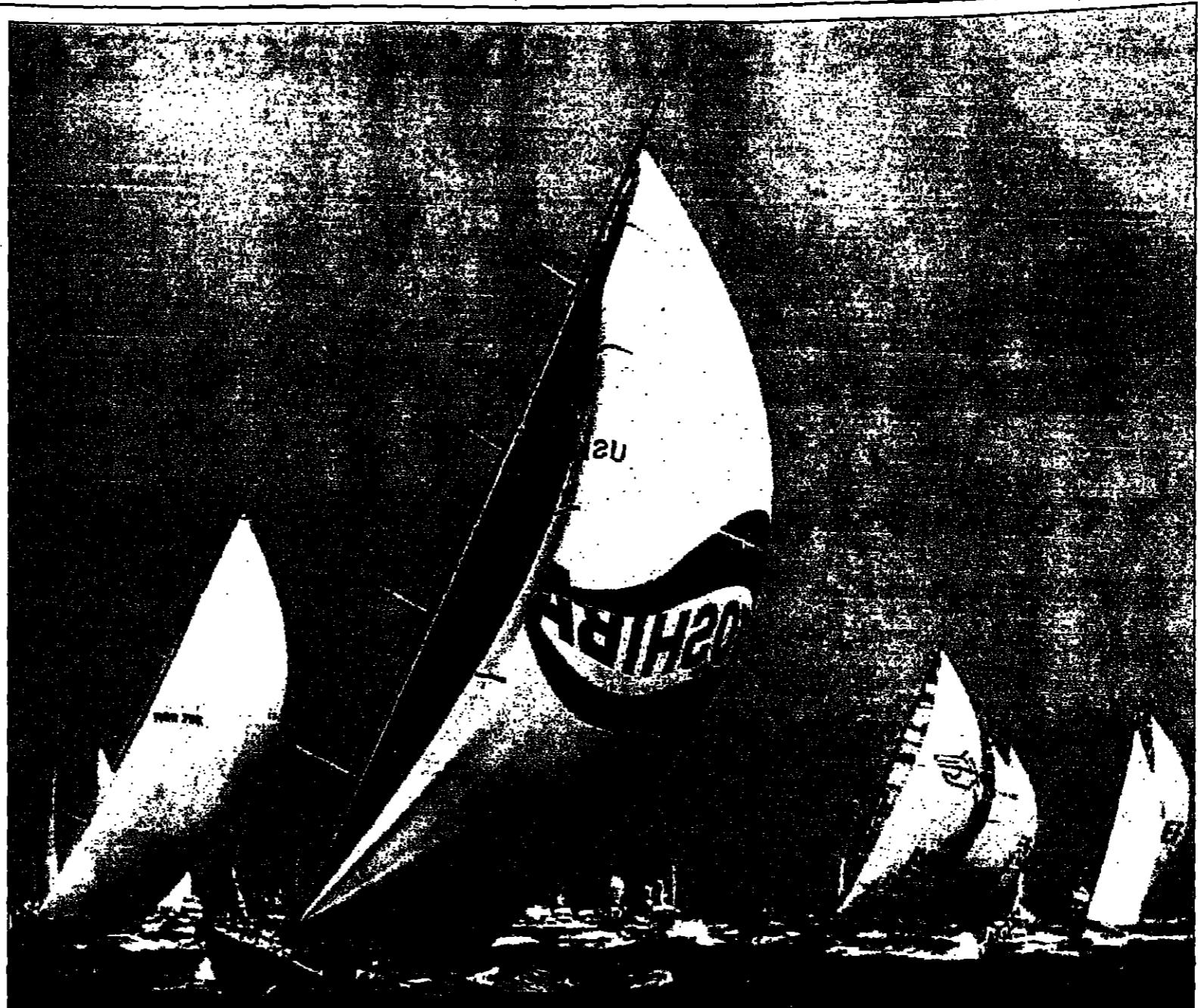
Malcolm Alker on a full-time

contract until December 2000.

The 19-year-old hooker, last season's Alliance Player of the Year at The Willows, is the top try scorer in the reserves this season with seven.

● One of Australia's leading administrators, Shane Richardson, has resigned from his job as the chief executive at Cronulla and is being linked with the bid for Super League status at Gateshead.

"Like us, they are the right sort of team to beat Wigan. When the two of us meet, it's an arm-wrestle," Kear added.



Toshiba leads at the restart in Le Rochelle on the last leg of the Whitbread Round the World race yesterday

Photograph: Clive Mason/Alsport

## Drama of last dash keeps Merit on edge



**Grant Dalton**, skipper of Merit Cup, faces some difficult tactical decisions on the final leg of the Whitbread Race

WE HAVE got a great big problem. The final leg of the Whitbread, which started yesterday afternoon, we in Merit Cup knew would be a hugely tricky 450 miles for us. As if the technical bind we are in was not enough, the vagaries of the English Channel are a minefield. And the points between the boats chasing Paul Cayard's EF Language for second place are so finely balanced that we could be in the silver medal slot in Southampton tomorrow or we could just as easily be fifth.

Which is great for all the people watching, and we hope the Solent will be full of boats, not just to mark the end of this race, but the end of the Whitbread as they hand over after 25 years to Volvo. But we would have preferred to be in Cayard's

position, where things are sewn up. We thought we would be comfortable when we were leading the last leg across the Atlantic and had the two boats we wanted covered, Innovation Kvaerner and Swedish Match.

The two boats with us now are the silver medal slot in Southampton tomorrow or we could just as easily be fifth.

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# Premier passion stirs Charlton's happy family

**Rupert Cornwell**  
on the community  
club aiming to rejoin  
the upper class in  
Monday's play-off

FOR Peter Varney, Charlton Athletic season ticket holder since 1960, the darkest hour came one snowy midweek night in 1974. Rochdale were the visitors, Charlton were in what was then the Third Division, and 3,000 wretched souls were scattered around the crumbling, desolate expanses of The Valley. Back in 1938, a record 75,031 had filled the old place for a game, but spiritually and physically, the club that grew from the bowels of south-east London to be home to footballing gods like Sam Bartram, Jimmy Seed and Eddie Firmani, was dying.

A decade later Charlton went bankrupt, and almost out of existence. In 1985 they left the Valley. The ground turned into an archaeological site, a sporting Pompeii a stone's throw from the Woolwich Ferry, lost beneath a jungle of weeds. Long years of exile followed, first at Selhurst Park and then at Upton Park. A generation of supporters were lost, without even the guarantee the club would ever return to SE7, as Greenwich Council rejected the redevelopment plan put forward by the club's new owners.

Today Varney is Charlton's managing director. And if his club defeat Sunderland in the First Division play-off final on Monday, the Addicks – a nickname said to derive from a local fishmonger's habit of giving the players free haddock and chips when they won – could be in the Premiership. One of the true fairy-tales of modern football would be complete.

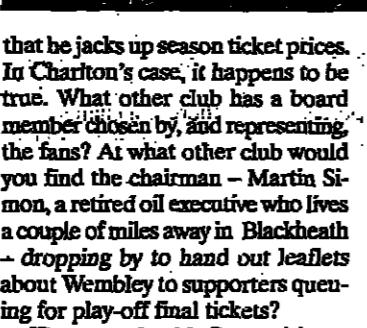
For the fairy-tale's origins, look to the improbable setting of the Greenwich borough elections of 1990 when, as surely never before or since in the history of this island, football became politics. Exasperated and despairing, the fans formed the Valley party with the sole platform of bringing Charlton home. It won 15,000 votes, twice as many as the Liberal Democrats. Labour Party HQ over at Walworth Road SE1 said enough was enough, planning permission was granted, and a cosy new Valley was built where the old one had stood. On 5 December, 1992, the Addicks were back and 8,000 watched as they beat Portsmouth 1-0. It was not the greatest game, but old men wept like children. The club had walked through the valley of death, and had been saved by its supporters. It owed them and it knew it.

"This club is for the fans..." The phrase trips off the average football director's tongue with the same ease



Changing seasons:  
1956 (above): A packed Valley watches as Arsenal's Doug Lishman attempts to prise open the Charlton defence.  
1988 (left): The crowds have long gone as weeds take over a decaying and deserted ground.  
1996 (right): Boom time as building work reflects the renaissance of the club saved by its supporters.

Photographs: Allsport and Robert Hallam



that he jacks up season ticket prices. In Charlton's case, it happens to be true. What other club has a board member chosen by, and representing, the fans? At what other club would you find the chairman – Martin Simon, a retired oil executive who lives a couple of miles away in Blackheath – dropping by to hand out leaflets about Wembley to supporters queuing for play-off final tickets?

The quarrels with Greenwich are

not even a memory. Club and borough jointly operate initiatives against racism. Few local schools are without their branch of the "Junior Reds" – entitling members, among other things, to attend home games for £1. If they can play a bit as well, they join Charlton's youth scheme and "schools of excellence" from which more than one first-teamer has graduated.

Much of the finance comes from the "Valley Gold" scheme, where the

supporters contribute £10 a month, in return for priority in booking fixtures and discounts at the club shop. 2,000 fans have signed up, meaning £250,000 a year for the search for homegrown stars. The one blemish on the happy families image has been drugs – five players have tested positive in four years, the last of them Jamie Stuart, the former England Under-21 player, was sacked in December after admitting using cocaine.

Otherwise, careful husbandry rules. There are some big names: goa poacher Clive Mendonca, the nimble Mark Kinsella and, most lately, the Yugoslav-Australian goalkeeper Sasa Ilic, once of Partizan Belgrade, but who a year ago was playing for the Sussex side St Leonards while completing a law degree at university. Now, with nine successive clean sheets, Ilic is putting even Bartram in the shade. But

Charlton's true pedigree remains south London – gritty, matey and street-smart, a team where the whole is far greater than the sum of its parts. Small wonder that in Alan Curbishley, the club has a manager half the Premiership would kill for.

Financially too, Charlton is in prudent hands. "At Christmas we

were screaming for us to buy another striker," Varney recalls, "but we said, only when there's money to cover the entrance to the old North Stand for 65 years. "It was never any trouble," he said, "in fact, it was very pleasant to have around."

A couple of doors further down the street, Mark Wilkins remembered that "the old lady who lived next door wasn't a football fan, but she used to love sitting in her window on match days, watching the people go past: The people in Withdean talk about having gardens smashed up and fences pulled down, but we never had any of it."

The man who is trying to persuade the residents of Withdean that their fears are groundless is Nick Rowe, Brighton's general manager. If the move is approved (12 June is likely to be decision day), he expects that most, if not all, of the 5,400 home supporters that can be accommodated at the stadium will be season-ticket holders.

"It will be almost like a contract," he said. "People will be asked to sign a code of conduct, asking them to respect the vicinity of the ground and the immediate neighbourhood at Withdean, and to use public transport of park-and-ride schemes to travel to the ground.

"If they transgress, their tickets will be suspended, but our fans are so desperate to have us back that I know they will meticulously observe the rules."

For all his efforts, many Withdean residents remain unconvinced, and similar prejudice would no doubt be exposed by an equivalent proposal in many parts of the country. Football may approach the millennium in apparent good health but, for some, it will be stuck in the 1970s forever.

## Atkins happy as underdog

THE Northampton Town manager, Ian Atkins, has taken a leaf out of Alex Ferguson's book of mind games in the build-up to tomorrow's Nationwide League Second Division play-off final.

Atkins used the kind of psychological warfare the Manchester United manager is famed for when he claimed his side are "massive underdogs" going into the match against Grimsby Town. This is despite the fact that Northampton finished fourth in the table, just one place and one point below the Mariners.

Atkins feels Northampton have upset the odds to reach Wembley again just 12 months after they won promotion by beating Swansea in the Third Division play-off final. He maintains the Cobblers are small fry compared to Alan Buckley's

## Wales cast as poor relations

WALES will unveil two new international shirts next week to underpin the stark contrasts between the rich and poor of international football.

Just days after England announced a new £50m five-year link-up with Umbro, Wales will be completing the final phase of a deal with the Italian company, Lotto, that nets them less than £1m over four years.

A new red first-choice shirt, plus a "diadillo yellow" away strip, will be revealed at the team's training camp hotel near Chester.

The Football Association of Wales spokesman, Mark Evans, said: "We are half-way through a four-year deal with Lotto and this is the final change of kit. We cannot match the sort of money that England can pull in."

"Frankly it's hard to get companies interested in countries that are down in the 100s in the world rankings, which is why we object so much to the way that Fifa is calculated

because it has a knock-on effect on many things."

Wales have been with Umbro, Adidas and Admiral in the past and are already actively looking for a new deal for the future. They are even considering the policy followed by Leicester City of marketing their own kit after the Lotto deal runs out.

Wales have decided to abandon their all-yellow second kit because the players had the same problem as Manchester United discovered with their infamous grey kit in a match at Southampton a couple of years ago – they could not see their colleagues properly.

It was going to be worn last year in the World Cup match in Eindhoven against the Netherlands, but a late decision was made to change to a white kit that night... and Wales still lost 7-1.

Kilmarnock were celebrating yesterday after being officially confirmed as Scotland's fourth

## Seagulls stuck with the Visigoth factor

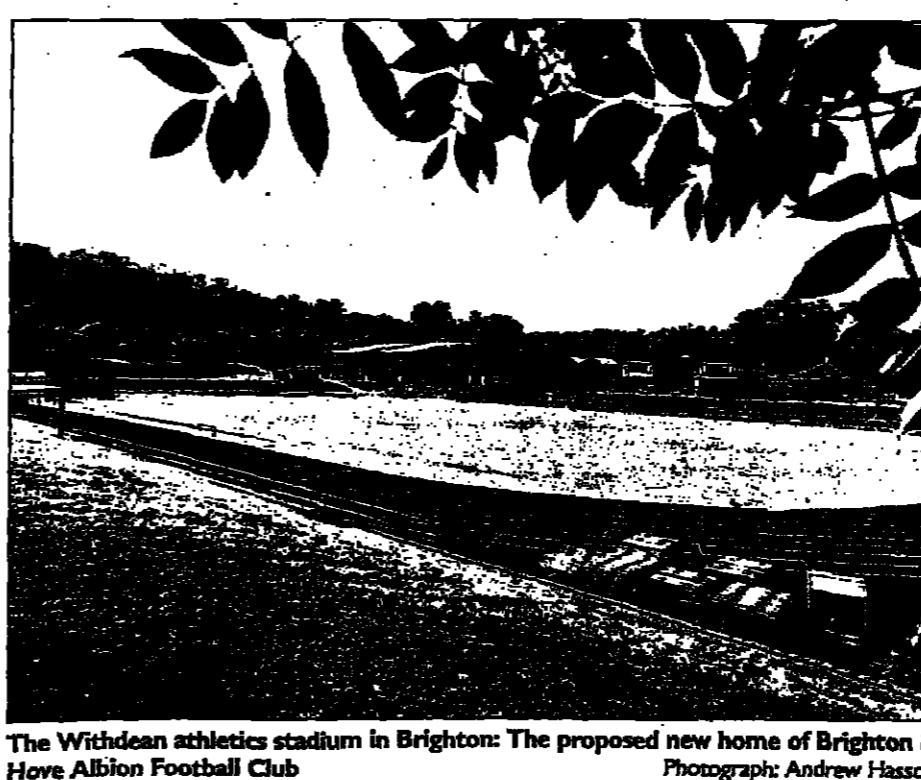
Brighton's life as the nomads of the Football League is not guaranteed to have a happy ending, Greg Wood reports

with its members is to realise that for all the confident swagger about modern British football, there are still plenty of people for whom "football fan" is a synonym of Visigoth.

There are, of course, some genuine and reasonable concerns, particularly with regard to the extra traffic which may be attracted to the area on match days. There are also understandable fears that, since no firm plans are in place for a new, permanent home for the Seagulls, the arrangement may not be as temporary as is claimed. Others, meanwhile, point out that while Brighton's itinerant status is unfortunate, it is a problem of their own making, since Bill Archer, the

former chairman, sold their old home at the Goldstone Ground without first arranging a long-term alternative. It is not just the locals, but also many Brighton fans, who worry that Archer, while no longer in control, remains the club's largest individual shareholder.

Yet still it is hard to credit the extent to which many Withdean residents dread the possible arrival of a football team in their midst. One leaflet which circulated in the area warned that fans would be "urinating in front gardens". There is talk of "inevitable" fights between supporters, of a community which "will break up because we will all move away from here."



The Withdean athletics stadium in Brighton: The proposed new home of Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club  
Photograph: Andrew Hasson

# Time for England veil to be lifted

By Glenn Moore  
Football Correspondent

THE veil goes up on Glenn Hoddle's World Cup preparations today as he begins the final phase of England's build-up. This afternoon, at Wembley, Hoddle should field the core of the team he wants to start the finals against Tunisia in Marseilles on 15 June, together with a number of players who either have to prove their fitness or need matches to regain it.

Coming into both categories is Paul Gascoigne who, having nearly skewered himself with a

series of further indiscretions, will, as so often, be the centre of attention. Darren Anderton will not be far behind, but Jamie Redknapp will not be in contention. He withdrew from the squad yesterday with a knee injury. Redknapp added that he had been invited to travel with the England party to the finals by Hoddle.

The World Cup 22 will be named on 2 June and, with the likes of Gianfranco Zola, David Ginola and Juminho already set to miss out on *France 98*, few are taking a place for granted. With Ian Wright, Les Ferdinand and Tim Flowers also needing matches

and, and the likes of Rio Ferdinand, Rob Lee, Dion Dublin and Phil Neville still with much to prove, the team-sheet could be as interesting as the match.

That should be a one-sided affair. Saudi Arabia did draw with England in Riyadh 10 years ago and have just qualified for their second successive World Cup, but they are not a strong side. The Riyadh match was against a disjointed England team, featuring five debutants, during a low period of Bobby Robson's management. It did include Tony Adams, who scored, and David Seaman, who made a disappointing debut, but

Wembley, prior to a World Cup, should be a different matter.

The Saudis' warm-up programme has included a series of undistinguished displays including narrow wins over Namibia and Australia, a draw with Iceland, 3-0 home defeats to Germany and Brazil and a 5-0 drubbing, also in Riyadh, by Mexico. That match, in the Intercontinental Cup in December, was the last before Carlos Parreira, who coached Brazil to victory in the last World Cup, took over on a £2m contract.

As that deal illustrates, even the Premiership is pernicious compared to the oil-rich king-

dom and it is this wealth which has raised doubts about the fixture's arrangement.

The official line is that the Saudis, having a similar style to Tunisia, are ideal opponents. However, England fly to the Mediterranean on Monday to play Morocco, who are even more similar to their north African neighbours, on Wednesday. This would appear to make the Saudi match, already unlikely to tell us much about the England players' form and international capability, even less worthwhile.

Since England are not short

of requests for Wembley friend-

Aylesbury have been previous opponents.

Nevertheless, it appears a special visit. Opposing delegations are usually treated to a pre-matched lunch at a West End hotel. The Saudis were instead guests at the Guildhall, the City of London's most prestigious venue, last night. Tonight they host a reciprocal function at the Dorchester. No doubt further trade negotiations, following a recently concluded £20bn arms deal, will be facilitated.

Coincidentally, 12 hours before the Saudi team flew into Heathrow on Thursday, the two British nurses, who have

been released early from their prison sentences in a Saudi jail, arrived at Gatwick.

Assuming he did want the fixture none of this should trouble Hoddle – with Gascoigne, faith healers and marketing rows he has enough diplomatic problems with football. A side issue is how England's players react to Paul Diakun's refereeing tutour, but the main thing is the result and performance. For a number of reasons the convincing victory England are very capable of would be very welcome.

ENGLAND (Possible 3-0-3): Flowers; Neville, Adams, Campbell; Anderton, Barry, Gascoigne, Ince; P. Neville, Sheringham, Wright.

## Back on a wing and a prayer

For the Spur nicknamed 'Sick Note' the season is just beginning. Clive White on Darren Anderton's fight to be in France

WHATEVER tactical differences Glenn Hoddle and his predecessor as England coach Terry Venables may have, the two men seemingly agreed on one thing: a fit Darren Anderton is crucial to England's international success.

There is a feeling of *déjà vu* about the Tottenham's midfielder's call up which could get quite spooky should he be selected for today's match against Saudi Arabia and score. Two years ago, just prior to Euro '96, he was also coming back from injury, on that occasion straight from a seven month lay-off, when Venables, as Hoddle has done now, selected him despite his inactivity. Anderton scored in the friendly against Hungary and went on to figure prominently in England's glorious failure in the finals.

While Anderton has yet to play for Hoddle, his England debut was Venables' first game in charge. That was against Denmark at Wembley in 1994, when the young Spur produced, in the words of Ossie Ardiles, then Tottenham manager "the most impressive international debut I have ever seen".

The former Portsmouth player, of course, had been signed by Venables when he was manager at White Hart Lane, for what now seems a paltry £1.75m. "He makes goals, he scores goals and his all-round contribution is excellent," Venables once said. "From the first time I saw Darren I thought he had the potential to be an outstanding international player."

Now, as then, there has been accusations against the England management of a bias towards Spurs players which can not make Anderton's return to the

**'We have given him some tests and he's flying. He's always on his toes and that takes some doing'**  
— Glenn Hoddle

he persuaded Gross to allow him to play in the last two games – "I couldn't expect Glenn to pick me on my performances for the reserves" – and fortunately for Anderton it was enough to persuade Hoddle that he was not a lost cause.

Indeed, the former Spur's faith in the player has put some Paxton Road end steleards to shame. "You'll always get a few who think your hearts not in it," Anderton said. "It's hurtful, because though Tottenham have been very good to me I think I've also been good to Tottenham. When I got the opportunity to go to Manchester United I stayed when everyone else went on their way."

With the injuries he has had – four hernias and one groin operation – it is as well as a guinea

pig on one occasion. "There will be times after a game when I would feel stiff but I didn't want to say anything otherwise I'd be slaughtered," he said. "It's not nice, all I wanted to do was play. The worse times were when I was coming back to fitness and doing okay only to suffer little breakdowns. But I never wrote off my chances of making the World Cup."

Still coltish looking despite his 26 years, he is now confident that he has fully recovered, but while the season may just be starting for him, just as it was two years ago, he accepts that he needs a run-out

to be happy to do the simple things at the moment, which is what happens when you've been out for a long time," Hoddle said. "Your first thought is whether the injury is going to go again. You don't concentrate on what you're trying to achieve with the ball. He's not back to his very, very best but he can become that. He needs a run-out



Tottenham's Darren Anderton: Back to fitness and back in the England fold

Photograph: Brendan Monks

## Crewe goalkeeper's dream of France becomes a nightmare

**AROUND THE WORLD**  
BY RUPERT METCALF

### Nigeria

FOR poor Ademola Bankole, the World Cup dream lasted just two days. Crewe Alexandra's goalkeeper was dropped from Nigeria's World Cup squad on Thursday – just two days after he had been picked in the provisional party for the finals in France.

On Tuesday Nigeria's coach Bora Milutinovic included Bankole in a list of 29 players, which will be reduced to 22 by the 2 June deadline for finalising squads. The Crewe player was one of four goalkeepers in a party which was without two experienced custodians: Ike Shorunmu, who broke an

### Colombia

THE former Newcastle United striker Faustino Asprilla has threatened to pull out of Colombia's World Cup squad who let in all four goals, including two scored by Manchester City's on-loan Georgian striker Mikhail Kavalashvili, carried the can.

"Bankole was sacked by Milutinovic from the squad for conceding cheap goals," Austin Mghbolu of the Nigerian Football Association, said on Thursday. The coach has been under fire in Nigeria for overlooking stalwarts like Rufai – who may now be recalled – and Samson Siasia.

### Romania

ahead of other contenders who was overlooked. That same Tuesday night the Nigerians lost 4-0 to Grasshopper Zurich in a warm-up match in Switzerland – and Bankole, who let in all four goals, including two scored by Manchester City's on-loan Georgian striker Mikhail Kavalashvili, carried the can.

"Bankole was sacked by Milutinovic from the squad for conceding cheap goals," Austin Mghbolu of the Nigerian Football Association, said on Thursday. The coach has been under fire in Nigeria for overlooking stalwarts like Rufai – who may now be recalled – and Samson Siasia.

### Romania

THE Romania coach, Gheorghe Hagi, who is quitting his job after the World Cup to take over the Greek national team, is still squabbling with his football federation.

Jordanescu is currently closed with his players in a training camp at Potana Brasov in

### Brazil

squad leave for France on Thursday, as television stations interrupted regular programmes for live pictures of the team's plane taking off from Rio airport.

There were no repeats of the previous World Cup's controversy, when the names of players were printed on each seat, upsetting Romario when he was placed between two other players. He insisted he preferred to travel by the window, sparking a controversy which required intervention from Ricardo Teixeira, the president of the Brazilian football confederation. This time the seat with "Romario" stamped on it was next to the window.

**18 DAYS UNTIL THE WORLD CUP FINALS BEGIN**

# Brown set to take friendlies seriously

## Football

By Phil Shaw

in New York

DURING nearly five years of Craig Brown's management, Scotland's record in non-competitive fixtures has been as dismal as their performance in reaching the finals of major tournaments is impressive.

In tonight's penultimate World Cup warm-up game against Colombia in the Giants Stadium, they will attempt to purge the tendency towards taking friendly matches too literally. Away from their successes in qualifying campaigns, Scotland have won only four and lost nine of their 15 games under Brown. The victories, moreover, were all single-goal affairs, against Austria, Ecuador, Malta and Australia; scarcely the most encouraging pedigree with which to confront one of South America's leading sides.

However, by naming a team which is likely to resemble closely his line-up for the opening match of *France '98* against Brazil, Brown effectively acknowledged yesterday that the time for experimentation is all but over. Tonight's result may not have any long-term significance, but it would clearly be psychologically disadvantageous to go into the World Cup with defeats by Colombia and the United States behind them.

Brown was already committed to using his third-choice

goalkeeper, Neil Sullivan. Otherwise, he had intimated that the team would be a full-strength one, only to lose his only proven scorer at international level, Kevin Gallacher, to a stomach upset.

Darren Jackson, who should at least be fresh after a season largely spent warming the bench at Celtic, steps in to form an Old Firm striking partnership with Gordon Durie. But it is in midfield that Scotland's dependence on the new champions is most conspicuous.

Three of the quintet normally wear the Celtic shamrock. The most significant selection is that of Craig Burley in the central role where his performances earned him the accolade of being the Scottish Football Writers' Player of the Year.

Brown normally uses the former Chelsea player as a wing-back, yet his form for Celtic has evidently persuaded the manager to accommodate him in a unit that must compensate for the loss of Gary McAllister.

"We've used Craig there before, during the World Cup match against Sweden at Ibrox, and also in the Under 21s," Brown said. "We're well aware of his capabilities."

Brown also reported that Jackie McNamara had finally shaken off a nagging ankle problem. John Collins, expected to share McAllister's creative mantle with Burley, is short of match practice after a toe injury, but is too important to the



Craig Brown has turned to the Celtic striker Darren Jackson to provide the firepower against Colombia tonight

Photograph: Craig Halkett

Brown's plans not to start tonight's game.

Colombia are one of England's group opponents next month and will be monitored on Glenn Hoddle's behalf by Kenny Sansom, the former Arsenal and Crystal Palace full-back. They provided Scotland's last

test before *Euro '96*, winning 1-0 in a Miami monsoon, and have brought a squad brimming with familiar names.

Faustino Asprilla, the match-winner that night, is expected to play, despite his reported concern over alleged death threats to Colombian

players and officials. The 36-year-old Carlos Valderrama, he of the hair that resembles an exploding root vegetable, is also likely to pull the midfield strings.

Brown said: "Colombia's record in qualifying was pretty useful, with eight wins and four draws out of 16 matches. They

score goals freely, but they're definitely vulnerable and the goalkeeper Oscar Cordoba, is brilliant but erratic.

"I've studied the video of their game against Yugoslavia. Cordoba was sent off after half an hour but they still drew 0-0. Asprilla's obviously a danger."

SCOTLAND 0-0-2: Sullivan (Wimbledon); Calderwood (Tottenham); Hendry (Blackburn); McAllister (Celtic); McAllister (Celtic); Durie (Celtic); Jackson (Celtic); Durie (Rangers).

COLOMBIA 0-0-2: O' Cordoba (Boca Juniors); Bernal (Boca Juniors); Rodriguez (Real Madrid); Montoya (Real Madrid); Asprilla (Atletico Nacional); Serna (Atletico Nacional); Valderrama (Miami Fusion); Rincon (Real Madrid); Perea (Real Madrid); Duran (New York/New Jersey MetroStars); Asprilla (Parma).

## FA charges Batty with misconduct

DAVID BATTY is in further trouble with the Football Association after being charged with misconduct.

The combative Newcastle United and England midfielder is alleged to have pushed the referee David Elleray after being sent off for the third time this season at Blackburn Rovers on 10 May.

Batty, who is with Glenn Hoddle's squad preparing for the World Cup, is already ruled out for the first five matches of next term, following three dismissals. He now faces the possibility of an additional one-match suspension if found guilty of misconduct.

The FA spokesman, Adrian Bevington, said: "David Batty has been charged with misconduct relating to an incident which occurred following his sending-off by Mr Elleray at Blackburn. He has 14 days to respond and request a personal hearing."

Batty, 29, was dismissed at Ewood Park for allegedly punching the Rovers midfielder Garry Flitcroft, and intends to use video evidence to prove his innocence.

Batty's other two dismissals during the season came against Aston Villa and Derby County. Ironically, the combative midfielder had never been sent off in his career before he joined Newcastle in February 1996.

ROY EVANS, the Liverpool manager, is closing in on the South African-born striker Sean Dundee in a £2m deal.

Representatives of the Anfield club are in Germany attempting to tie up the transfer of the Karlsruhe player. Evans needs cover up front, with Robbie Fowler likely to be out until Christmas with his knee injury.

Dundee is on offer because Karlsruhe, after their relegation from the Bundesliga First Division, need to off-load their high-wage earners. After taking out German citizenship, the 25-year-old forced his way into their international squad, but injuries and a dip in form mean he will not make Berti Vogts' final 22 for *France 98*.

Evans is expecting to recoup his outlay on Dundee by selling the Czech midfielder Patrik Berger to Roma for £3.5m next week. Liverpool could also off-load Neil Ruddock to West Ham and are also willing to let Michael Thomas leave.

The Everton manager, Howard Kendall, has confirmed his interest in the Derby County midfielder Lee Carsley. The tough-tackling Republic of Ireland international is Kendall's latest target, after admitting that Bolton's Alan Thompson is on his wanted list.

"Midfield is an area where I'm looking to strengthen and Carsley is a player I admire,"

Kendall said. "I have spoken to Derby manager Jim Smith."

Tottenham's former Italian international mid-fielder Nicola Berti has agreed a new one-year deal with the White Hart Lane club. The 30-year-old arrived in January on a free transfer from Internazionale.

Bristol City have signed the Gillingham striker Ade Akinbiyi for a club-record £1.2m. The fee more than doubled the previous highest they had paid: £500,000 for Andy Cole in 1992.

Akinbiyi, the former Norwich striker, scored 22 goals for the Gills in 1997-98, having joined the Kent club in January last year.

Kit Symons is on the brink of taking a 50 per cent pay cut to stay with relegated Manchester City. The 27-year-old defender, with his current contract at an end, was initially upset by City's offer of a new one-year deal that slashed his £4,000-a-week wages in half, but in the absence of any better offers he looks likely to stay at Maine Road.

Sascha Ilic, Charlton Athletic's Yugoslav goalkeeper, will be watched by two members of Yugoslavia's coaching staff at the Nationwide League First Division play-off final against Sunderland on Monday. A good performance could earn him a late call up to the Yugoslav World Cup squad for this summer's finals.

# De Bruin heading for legal battle

## Swimming

By Guy Hodgson

MICHELLE DE BRUIN, who has ploughed through as much suspicion and innuendo as water for two years, appeared yesterday to be heading for a lengthy legal battle to clear her name of a charge that she tried to manipulate a drugs test. If she fails, she could be banned from swimming for life.

The solicitor for Ireland's triple Olympic champion has revealed the B test on the urine sample she gave had confirmed the findings of the A sample, which contained a potentially lethal dose of alcohol.

Her case is now expected to come before the doping panel of swimming's international governing body, Fina, next month, but even if she is found guilty it is not likely to be the end of the matter.

The 28-year-old, who as Michelle Smith won three gold medals at the Atlanta Olympics, has said she would then appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland, while a further move into the civil courts cannot be ruled out.

De Bruin's defence is likely to rest on her call for the governing body to prove that she was the one who manipulated the sample.

Her solicitor, Peter Lennon, who watched the analysis of the twin samples in the International Olympic Committee-accredited laboratory in Barcelona that carried out the original test, said: "It appears clear at this time that our client can only be charged with physical manipulation and not the use of any banned substance... We do not expect there to be any change between the adulteration results of the A and B sample."

The Dublin-born swimmer added that she was "more determined than ever" to fight any charges that may be formally brought against her.

Fina said yesterday they had not received the result of the back-up test, but a spokesman confirmed De Bruin could face a life ban for tampering with a test.

There could be no retrospective punishment over her Olympic gold medals, however.

A Fina spokesman said: "The swimmer's solicitor can say what he wants, but we have not yet had the result from the laboratory, and until we do, we cannot comment."

"When we have the result, we will tell the swimmer first. We will then announce whether the matter will go before the doping panel. The penalty will be at the discretion of the panel, but for manipulation of a test it can be from zero to life."

De Bruin underwent an out-of-competition test on January 10 at Kilkenny in Ireland, when Fina said the A sample showed "unequivocal signs of adulteration" and "physical manipulation".

Prince Alexandre de Merode, chairman of the IOC's medical commission, said the sample included a potentially lethal concentration of alcohol, and that alcohol could be used to mask the presence of banned drugs. De Bruin has denied tampering with her test, and said any manipulation must have taken place after it was out of her sight.

In the past De Bruin has said: "My success is down to one thing - hard work." Now she must labour to prove her innocence.

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# SPORT

Saturday 23 May 1998

## Gascoigne ready to make his point

### Football

By Mark Pierson

AT THE end of another troubled week in the roller-coaster life of Paul Gascoigne, England's most talked about footballer looks certain to be given the chance today to redeem himself on the one stage where he says he feels at home.

Such is the off-field interest in the Middlesbrough midfielder these days that the mere sight of him on a football pitch will be a source of relief to all those who have been driven to despair by his drinking, smok-

ing and late-night intake of junk food.

England's last home match before the World Cup begins next month brings Saudi Arabia to Wembley this afternoon. Glenn Hoddle is hoping his "forceful" conversation with Gascoigne on Monday night, and clear public warning will spur the player to show that he is ready for France in mind and body.

It is clear that Gascoigne has knocked down on the training ground and the England coach yesterday appeared ready to give the 30-year-old Gascoigne his first start since that famous

night in Rome last October when England clinched their place in the finals.

"Gazza trains as hard as anybody even if he's not fully fit, and he's looking sharper every day," Hoddle said. "He's gradually getting there. The good thing is that he's now training totally injury free. He is not having any treatment or having to shield the ankle on the knee. He's had a great week."

Now has Gascoigne been overdoing it, as has so often been the case in the past. Hoddle said: "He's been monitored all the way. I've told him what I want and he's put the stint in

when he's been in the group. He's physically fully fit and now needs more and more training and sharpness."

The clearest of hints that Gascoigne will start against the Saudis came when Hoddle talked of the virtue of playing as many of his "spine" as possible.

That means Alan Shearer will start, probably Tony Adams too, and maybe David Seaman, although Ian Walker, whose last cap came against Italy 17 months ago, could be given the nod.

With ankle victim Paul Ince missing, David Batty or Nicky Butt will be given the holding

role in midfield, while Tottenham pair Darren Anderton and Les Ferdinand seem poised for returns after injury absences - two years in the case of Anderton.

"It's a balancing act between getting part of my spine in there, looking to shape a few things up, and little challenges still going on for places," Hoddle said. "Certain players need 90 minutes while others need a bit of a rest."

"I want to get the spine and build round that, which is what you have to do in a tournament. At this stage you don't want to show your hand too much. The

starting 11 won't exactly be an experiment, but probably not the team that starts against Tunisia."

Hoddle is sharpening the blade he knows he will bring down on seven necks in 10 days' time. He has decided on 20 of the players he will take to France and that leaves just two places available, with nine players

scrambling to make the squad he will announce on 1 June.

Hoddle's thoughts have crystallised in the past two months. In Switzerland in March, the coach said there were 12 or 13 "certainties" in his mind. Now it is even tighter. "I would say

I know 20 I want to take," he said. "There's two spots where we've still got an either-or situation, depending on a couple of injuries."

"It was the cruelest of several setbacks on international duty for Redknapp, who had previously been injured against Switzerland (1995), Scotland (1996) and South Africa (1997).

"It's desperate news for the lad. He just doesn't deserve the sort of luck that he's had when with England," Hoddle said. "He managed to get through four sessions with us but he had to be honest and the knee is just not up to scratch. That's it as regards the World Cup."

England vell-page 24



David Howell plays his second shot at the 17th hole during his round of 68 on the first day of the Volvo PGA Championship at Wentworth yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

## Davis completes his recuperation

### Golf

By Andy Farrell  
at Wentworth

ENGLISH golfers are no strangers to the American Hospital in Dubai and it is a testament to the quality of the institution that David Carter and Brian Davis were competing in the first round of the Volvo PGA Championship here yesterday.

Carter underwent a brain operation after collapsing in his hotel room in Dubai last year. Davis was found on the floor of his hotel room during this year's tournament in March, the 23-year-old from Enfield having blacked out while suffering from chickenpox.

A seven-week recuperation was necessary but it has proved beneficial. Last week Davis was 11th at the Benson and Hedges

International and six birdies in his last eight holes on the West Course yesterday left him with a 67 and behind only Swede Michael Jonzon's six-under lead.

"Chickenpox can be dangerous when you get older," explained the second year tour member. "I was in a bad state. I had seriously high blood clot levels and kept passing out. If I had fallen over and hit my

head when I was in my hotel room, it could have been life threatening. They kept me in hospital for a week for observation."

Davis picked up the illness from a boy who was let on board his plane from South Africa. "He was only on board for half an hour before a steward noticed and called a doctor but obviously on a plane the germs circulate," Davis said.

Davis' run started at the 11th, where his six-iron from the new fairway bunker on the right side of the fairway finished five feet from the hole. Three 12-footers and a couple of tap-ins completed the sequence. Jonzon, not one of the more gregarious of the Swedish golfers, did not drop a shot to devalue his six birdies but the ability to knock spots off the Wentworth layout was hardly contagious.

The greens proved tricky to read, leaving many of the leading contenders only just under par. Ernie Els and Bernhard Langer both returned 69s and Colin Montgomerie a 70. Els and Monty were partnered together and the major flaw in the Scot's game did not escape the South African's attention.

"When Colin misses some putts," Els said, "he lets everyone know." There are days, and this was one of them, when being the first to enquire after Montgomerie's round is ill-advised. On such occasions it does not really matter what is said, as the slightest of tremors can induce volcanic activity.

These supposedly gentle looseners are the responsibility of a press officer, who as well as the sponsor's shirts and sweaters could do with a suitably embossed flak jacket.

## Olsen wanted across Europe

By Bryn Palmer

CELTIC will have to come up with a highly attractive offer if they are to tempt Norway's coach, Egil Olsen, to lead them into the Champions' League next year.

The 56-year-old Olsen has emerged as one of the front-runners for the Parkhead post vacated by Wim Jansen's resignation last week. But Celtic are reported to be only one of 10 European clubs who have approached Olsen's agent to check on his availability.

Olsen intends to step down as national coach after leading Norway to their third World Cup under his guidance in France, where they are in the same group as Scotland. But such is his involvement with his country - twice working previously with the Under-21 team and also the Olympic team before taking over control of the full squad in 1990 - that he is reluctant to leave.

Olsen already has another job lined up with the Sports Academy in Norway and has also been offered a continuing 'analyst' role with the Norwegian football association. His unwillingness to uproot his family and three-year-old daughter is another factor that may see his name deleted from the Parkhead shortlist.

Olsen has also been linked with the vacancy at Sheffield

Wednesday - but Ron Atkinson, who was dismissed by the Hillsborough club a week ago, yesterday tipped the Football Association's technical director, Howard Wilkinson, to succeed him in the job.

"If you ask me who will get the job, my own bet by distance, would be Howard Wilkinson," Atkinson said. He feels that the South Yorkshire club chairman Dave Richards, a vice-president of the FA and one of the Premier League's representatives on the EA council, is now looking to Wilkinson to return to the club he guided between 1983 and 1988.

Wilkinson was Wednesday's No 1 one target six months ago, when David Pleat was sacked and the only stumbling block is the remaining two-and-a-half years of his contract with the FA. But Atkinson now believes Richards would be willing to pay the estimated £250,000 in compensation it would take to prise Wilkinson away from Lancaster Gate.

Jansen has also been linked with the job. Yesterday he returned home to the Netherlands to contemplate his future after his acrimonious departure from Celtic. He has already turned down an approach to coach Vitesse Arnhem and it is believed he is not interested in taking over at Hillsborough, with many offers from across Europe pouring in for his services.

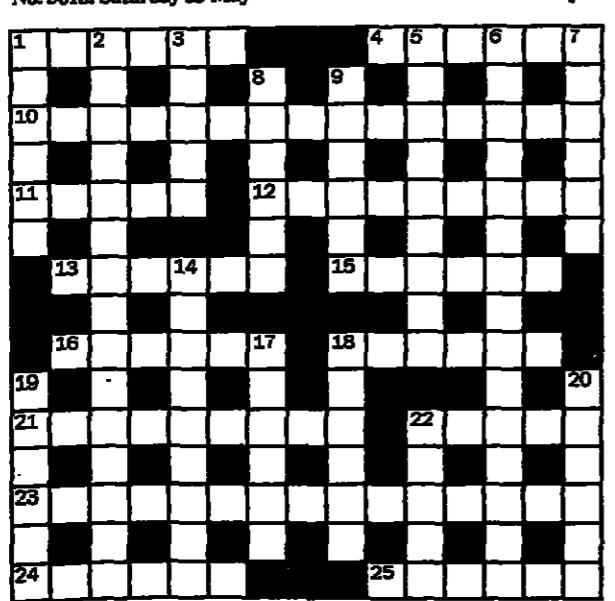
**BOMBARDIER**

**Seal of a**

### THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3618. Saturday 23 May

By Phil



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

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REDUNE NNR  
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KRIUDNSND  
ASTONISH ISSUE  
GOMCU  
EJECT PREMIERE  
DKOKHAC  
EXPERIENCE SHOT  
AICWOC  
LINGUINOPULAR  
GEISNA TENANT

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive handsigned copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5HL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winner: D McCrindle, Weymouth, Dorset; M Morris, Milnes, M Morris, Redhouse, Twickenham; K Barnes, Norwich.

**TWELVE PAGES  
OF SPORT BEGINS  
ON PAGE 15**

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BREWING FOR ENGLAND



# YOUR MONEY

## Personal finance, motoring and property

Saturday 23 May 1998

# Garden theft, a growth area

Thieves may target

not only the inside of your house but also the outside.

Your household insurance policy is unlikely to cover the damage, as Paul Slade discovers

It is easy to spend thousands of pounds on plants and decoration for your garden, as visitors to this week's Chelsea Flower Show have seen. It is equally easy to lose them. From a burglar or a vandal's point of view, a garden offers easy pickings and far less risk than breaking into your house.

The most ambitious thieves may go so far as to roll up a freshly turfed lawn and take that away. There have even been cases of whole garden ponds – complete with fountains and fish – being stolen.

A standard house and contents policy may give as little as £250 cover for the loss of items such as plants or garden furniture, which will not be much help for big losses like these.

Ian Frater of Commercial Union says: "It's something that, a few years ago, you would never have imagined happening. Shrubs are costing a lot more, people are putting more expensive items in their gardens, and they are getting stolen."

David Jones is a director of JSJ Insurance Services, a Manchester financial adviser which offers a specialist garden insurance policy called Plantsman Plus. He says: "We got some figures from Yorkshire Police when we set this contract up, and they were dealing with something like £4m a year of

theft from gardens. There really was some very expensive stuff gone. There's a lot of antique and semi-antique stuff in gardens now, and it's an obvious target for thieving."

Mr Jones recalls one recent Plantsman Plus claim of £10,000 from the owner of a large garden who had 14 statues stolen. One of Commercial Union's policyholders recently had a sundial worth £400 stolen. But anything from rose bushes to lawn mowers may also go missing.

Mr Frater says: "Let's say you leave the lawn mower lying on the front lawn while you go in to have lunch. Somebody might jump over the fence and nick the lawn mower. These are the sort of things that can happen."

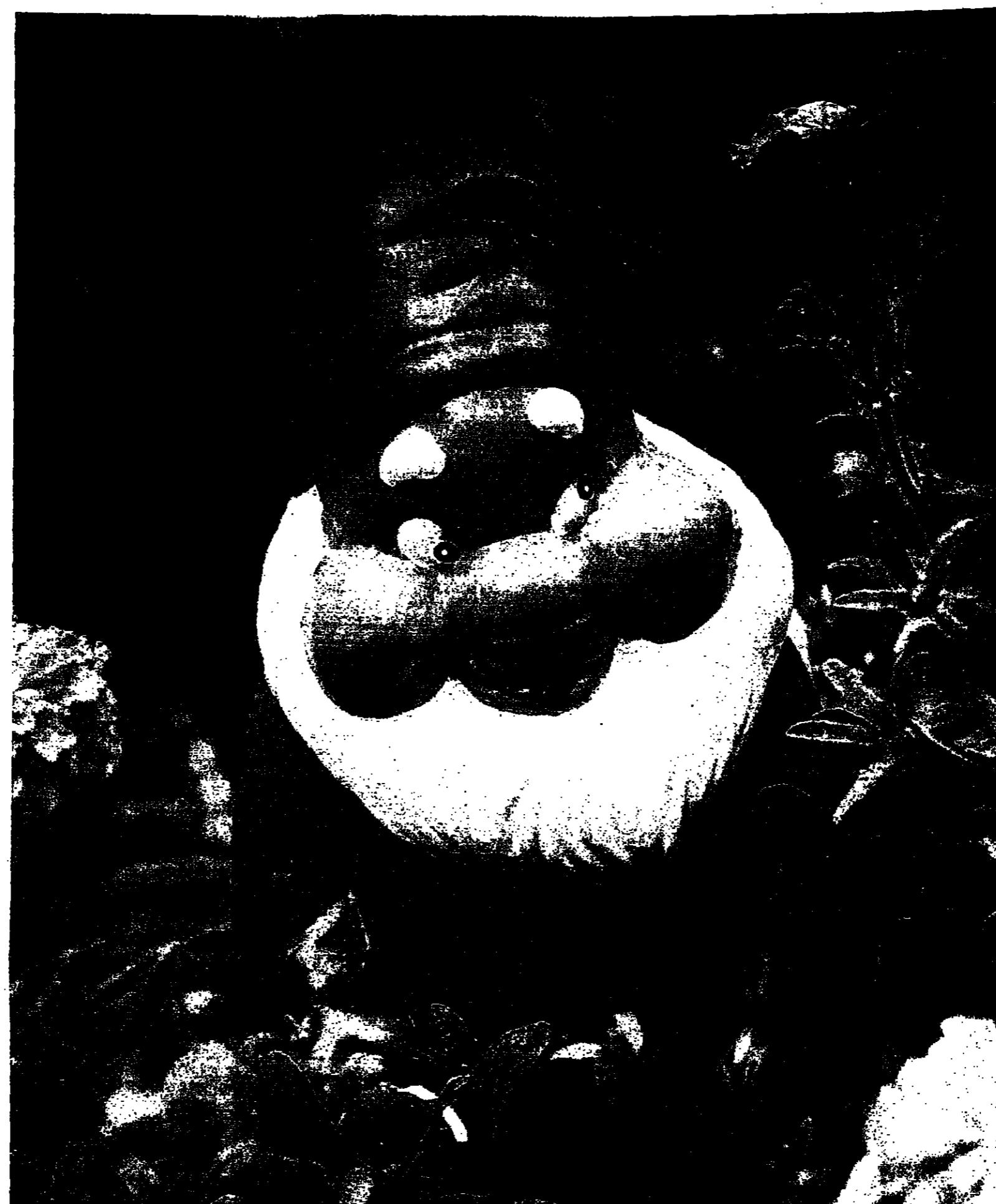
Bonsai are another popular target. Mr Jones says: "Most of them are put outside on display. They're quite small, relatively easy to move, and very expensive. You just tuck them under your arm and away you go."

JSJ gives a 5 per cent discount to Bonsai owners who fit a microchip to identify their prize plant if it gets stolen.

Car boot sales seem to be a popular way to sell the stolen goods on. Norfolk police recently reported that their raids on local car boot sales had uncovered a lot of stolen shrubs.

Commercial Union and Legal & General both offer £500 of cover for items left outside as part of their standard house and contents plans. Norwich Union, which underwrites the JSJ plan, offers £1,000 for policyholders over 55. Plantsman Plus itself gives £100 of cover for every £2.50 spent in premiums (including insurance premium tax) with a minimum premium of £50. The policy gives cover for fire, theft, vandalism and lightning.

A standard house and contents policy will include cover for structural items such as footpaths, walls or gates. The contents element will cover



property locked away in garages or sheds, although perhaps only up to a certain limit. L&G, for example, pays out up to 5 per cent of your total household contents cover for goods lost from outbuildings.

Mr Jones recommends

photographing expensive items. "Photographs do make life easier in the event of a claim."

This neatly underlines one central point. As with so much of personal finance, garden insurance is all about planning for the fuchsia.

**Theft object: no man is safe these days in the garden, as thieves home in on a lucrative market**

Photograph: Jean-Marc Truchet/Tony Stone

## Seal of approval that doesn't offer security

The aim is to make saving simpler and cheaper but it may increase the risks, says Andrew Verity

When the Treasury brought out its latest plan to encourage low earners to save this week, one high earner – bearded, with a tootie grin and open-necked shirt – was especially pleased.

Richard Branson's happiness sprang from a plan to give government endorsement to savings products just like the one offered by his own firm Virgin Direct. His mood was in stark contrast to the rest of the investment industry.

In a consultation document titled "Making Saving Easy", the Treasury took an unprecedented step in its drive to encourage all of us to save more. It proposed to give a stamp of approval – a benchmark – to savings vehicles which are simple, cheap and accessible.

Savings companies will be able to display the benchmark only if they offer an Individual Savings Account that meets prescribed standards. When it is introduced in April, the ISA will offer tax-free income and potential growth to savers who put their money in cash, insurance or stocks and shares.

At the heart of the problem is the cost issue. Mr Branson argues savers have lost billions by paying for six-figure fund managers to underperform the index. Paying for a unit trust that tracks an index may cost as little as 0.3 per cent of the investment. Paying an active fund manager usually costs at least 1 per cent.

But in spotlighting low costs, has the Government overlooked the question of risk? AUTIF, the unit trust trade body, complains savers who want a stake in the stock market will be pushed into one of the most volatile types of investment. Unlike active managers, managers of tracker funds must follow the stock market's every move, even when that's downwards. If the market plummets, savers could be stuck in a vehicle that lost the maximum, not the minimum, amount of money.

The Treasury says in its consultation document (in a tone that some perceive as patronising): "ISAs which meet the benchmark standards must be clear and simple, so that they are easy for ordinary people to understand and so help them avoid making poor choices".

The plan appears simple. Investors can save up to £5,000 a year tax-free, with a maximum of £3,000 in cash, £1,000 in insurance-based savings, or £5,000 in unit trusts. But the benchmark will go only to cash deposits, unit-linked insurance or tracker funds – because these are simplest and cheapest.

But are the simplest products the best? Not according to the savings industry. Tracker funds are simple and cheap, they are also quite risky. If consumers believe they carry government approval, the industry warns, they could feel seriously misled when the market dives.

giving the impression it is endorsing the product and that the product has wide-ranging suitability for almost all people. The consequences we fear are that people will buy benchmarked products, taking the Government's word, but will have insufficient warning about the one remaining risk in the product, which is the performance.

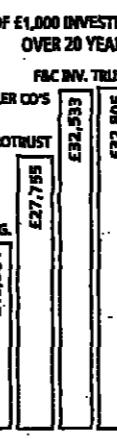
"If we were to have a substantial market correction or, even worse, the sort of crash that occurred in the 1970s, when the stock market lost nearly two-thirds of its value, we can be absolutely certain that investment funds would look for somebody to blame. We suspect the Government will be nowhere to be seen and the regulator will be seeing whom it can fine."

The Treasury says the aim of benchmarking is to avoid any nasty surprises for the customer. The products can be cheaper because they are so simple there is no need for advice, no hidden costs, no strings attached, no notice period and nothing damaging in the small print. As most in the savings industry admit, these are good principles, but removing the cost of advice has its own price.

Steve Muir, spokesman for Axa Sun Life, the insurance giant, said: "There's a lot of mention of how we won't suffer any nasty surprises. But people who are in a tracker fund when the market falls could

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## As radical chic as it gets

Collect to Invest: Italian design from the flower-power era turned convention upside-down. Now it's shaking London salerooms. John Windsor reports

Italian design is hot stuff. In 1968, while students and workers took to the streets in Paris, Berkeley and at the LSE in the cause of politics, Italians were rioting about design. They forced the 14th Milan Triennale exhibition to close after protesting that its designs were too mainstream.

Remember that next time you have the chance to sit in a Dorifora armchair designed by the maverick Italian Alchimia group. It mocks both over-elaborate traditional design and the constraints of modernism. Both a joke and a statement. A political statement, if you like. You can almost hear it talk.

In the late Seventies, Alchimia held gallery exhibitions that promoted design as art. They were a form of social/political subversion that has had no equal in this country. The nearest we have had to it is pop art – and punk.

Furniture, lamps, kitchen appliances and glass by turbulent Italian designers have become historical objects. Not just art history, but social and political history. This is why museums across the world are competing for examples, pushing up prices.

There has been a sudden deluge of Italian design in the London salerooms. Sotheby's and Bonhams held sales this month – with instructive results – and a sale containing the choicest, most iconic pieces is at Christie's South Kensington on 3 June (2pm). It is South Ken's first sale dedicated to Italian design.

Museums have been spending heavily because they fear that the Fesa Gaejano giant anglepoise lamp (1970-71) or the Cini Boeri "Serpentine" chair (1971) might be the last one they will get a chance to bid for.

This puts private buyers in a dilemma. Museums and rich collectors need only one example of each classic chair or lamp. Once they have bought one, they will not bid again. Demand then loses its edge. But who can tell.



A tilt at classical design that might leave you with back strain: above, Studio 65's 'Capitello' (1971) and, below, the Gruppo G14 upholstered tubular steel 'Fiocco' (1970)

given at London auctions recently to examples of a genuine rarity: the upholstered tubular steel Gruppo G14 "Fiocco" lounge chair (1970). Or is it because no one can sit for more than two minutes on the arty, sculptural thing without back strain?

One at Bonhams on Wednesday, estimated £1,200-£1,400 and missing a part, failed to find a buyer. Of two at Sotheby's last week, both estimated £1,500-£1,800, one fetched £1,725, the

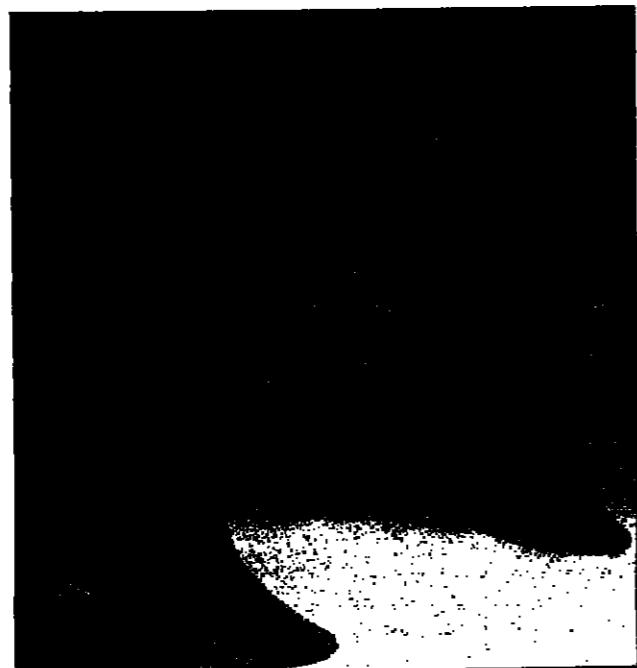
other was unsold. But last March Christie's South Ken got £2,070 for one. Demand seems to be wavering, but the chair is still a classic. Will anybody bid the estimated £1,500-£2,000 for South Ken's example? How many more are likely to come to auction? How many were made, anyway? That's the thing with Italian design. No one really knows. An educated guess says

there were around 200 Fioccos.

Other classics on offer at South Ken: the scrumptious Gruppo Strum design group's "Pratone" (meadow) chair – if you can call it a chair. It is a piece of pop art, a mat with giant polyurethane spikes resembling blades of grass. Its anti-design message is: bring the outside in – let radical design groups infiltrate society. One was unsold at £3,500 at Sotheby's last year. South Ken's is a 1986 re-edition estimated £2,500-£3,500.

As for the classic, and classical, "Capitello", by Studio 65 (1971), that tilts at Roman architecture and is tilted in a way that makes it unsuitable on: one was unsold, estimated £2,200-£2,800, at Bonhams two years ago. British collectors were not as glued up then as now. A year later, one sold for £2,530 at South Ken. Another on 3 June is estimated £2,000-£2,500.

Go for classic chairs and light-



Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (0171-581 7611).

An attractive site that offers a cuddly corporate guide to lead the way – Policy Plusius

ROBIN AMLÖT

It has been quite a week for news that will affect the way the Internet and the World Wide Web is likely to develop. The US Justice Department and 20 states' Attorneys General threw the collective book at software giant Microsoft over its Web browser. This case will drag on for some time before it is resolved. It has, after all, taken the Justice Department eight years to get to this point. It first began investigating Microsoft in 1990.

Of more immediate significance to anybody who already surfs the Web is the decision reached at the World Trade Organisation in Geneva this week. A deal was put forward that would bar governments for the next year from trying to collect tariffs on computer programmes and any other electronic goods delivered across national frontiers via the Internet.

The proposal does not cover Internet shopping involving products ordered from a Website and delivered by ordinary mail. What this means is that you can buy and download software from a Website in the US, for example, without creating a potential Value Added Tax liability for yourself. However, if you order the software on disc or CD together with a manual and it is delivered by the postman, you will have to pay VAT.

You can keep up to date with developments on the

least £2,000. There is an online Quotation Request Form that you can fill in to receive a free, no obligation valuation within 48 hours or less, which is guaranteed for a period of 15 days (even if bonus rates fall during that time).

There is a brief explanation on the Website telling you how the company arrives at its valuations. PolicyPlus takes the current value of a policy, applies the current bonus rates, both reversionary and terminal, through to maturity. This Formula Maturity Value is then discounted back to the current date to arrive at a purchase price.

The site also caters for potential policy purchasers. PolicyPlus provides explanations of the taxation and legal issues involved in TEPs and includes information from life companies. There is a list on the site of the TEPs currently available on the company's books and you may also register to receive sales lists of available policies updated on a weekly basis.

PolicyPlus claims to be unusual among TEP market-makers in having appointed an independent firm of solicitors to handle the legal aspects of its TEP sales and purchases. No charge is made on customers for the involvement of the firm, Thrings & Long. It is the largest firm of solicitors in Bath and has been in business for more than 200 years.

There is also a telephone helpline for those who remained mystified by the workings of the Web or who prefer not to commit their policy details or requirements to cyberspace.

PolicyPlus: [www.policyplus.com](http://www.policyplus.com)  
US Justice Dept: [www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov)  
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BRIAN  
TORA

Turning point in Far East?

Sark is such a wonderful island. The tranquil atmosphere delivers such a restful frame of mind that you become totally detached from the world. It was not surprising when, after a mere five days, I had forgotten that there had ever been an Asian crisis. Until President Suharto resigned, of course. But does this change at the top really make any difference?

Incoming President Habibie has a reputation for being an economic wild card. In the past he has been responsible for a rather erratic interest-rate policy and for seeking to turn the commodity-based economy of the third most populous nation on earth into something rather more high-tech – not so far successfully achieved. He was also vice-president under Suharto.

It will take a while to gain the measure of the new man, but much will depend on how much he is prepared to co-operate with the IMF. They should really be in the driving seat now, but he may have his own ideas about how Indonesians should manage their way out of their problems. And, of course, we do not know if the civil unrest will now moderate.

All prompted me to reconsider these markets on the other side of the world. We are approaching the first anniversary of the start of the Asian crisis, with every indication that the story will run and run. Domestic demand in the region remains flat, but this is helping the balance of payments position of these countries. At some stage the major international banks – who arguably were responsible for the collapse when they collectively withdrew their support – will feel more confident and return to the region. Certainly, talking to Alan Butler-Henderson, who used to be

ING Baring's man in the Far East, before becoming an independent commentator on the region, thinks that markets like Thailand and Malaysia have fallen to levels that discount all current problems. I hope he is right.

There is some sign that big business is beginning to dip a toe in the water, even if international money managers are still steering well clear. South-east Asia is a long way from being written off.

Of course, Japan remains a focal point. In Mr Butler-Henderson's view, bonds in Tokyo are over-bought and equities over-sold. Interestingly, he thinks that any correction might have implications for other equity markets. When the Japanese regain their confidence, they are likely to bring money back onshore.

What has been interesting about this whole sorry affair is how little impact it has had on the developed stock markets. In practice, the value of share markets in South-east Asia are of relatively little significance, if you exclude Japan. It may still take some time for the situation to fully unwind, but the long-term advantages – large populations, aspiring consumers, a strong work ethic – remain intact.

So far as Indonesia is concerned, they were a lot further behind many parts of the region and the considerable disruption that the events of the past few weeks will have delivered to the economy will not make recovery any easier. It will be a long time before we see them back on an upward path, but maybe the worst is behind them. It looks time to give the region more than just a cursory glance. But widows and orphans should still stay clear.

Brian Tora is chairman of the Greig Middleton Investment Strategy Committee.

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# Treasury steps into ISA minefield



THE  
JONATHAN  
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With the market as it is just now, it makes sense for new investors to put long-term money into an index-tracking fund, not an actively managed one

Helen Liddell, the Treasury minister responsible for financial services, has a reputation for being a tough cookie. I hope she is, for she will certainly need a thick hide if she is to see off the howl of industry protests that have greeted the Government's latest proposals for ISAs (individual savings accounts).

The Treasury this week produced its second consultation document on the subject, including details for the first time of the voluntary benchmarks which it hopes consumers will use for guidance when deciding which ISA to pick. The Government's idea is to set minimum standards for

cost and simplicity against which each ISA can be judged. If an ISA does not meet those standards – for example because it costs more than the benchmark annual management fee – it can still be offered for sale and qualify for tax-free status. But what it won't qualify for is the government stamp of approval, which the so-called CAT standard will inevitably be seen as. Now it doesn't take a genius to work out that any ISAs which don't qualify for this kind of approval are going to be a lot harder to sell than those which are.

Philip Warland, the director general of Autif, the unit trust industry's trade body, which

was so incensed by what the Government is proposing that he felt moved to describe this week's proposals as "economically illiterate, politically inept and lethal for some consumers".

Meanwhile, over at the regulators' corner, both Howard Davies, the head of the Financial Services Authority, and Peter Dean, the Investment Ombudsman, expressed doubts about the wisdom of trying to set standards for any kind of equity-based investment product. Their concern seems to be that, by implicitly endorsing products which by their nature are not risk-free, the Government is in danger of raising public expectations and finding itself blamed for inducing people to put their money into something that turns out to have been ill-advised, or even to have cost them money.

They have a point, though quite why anyone should ever regard a Government endorsement for a financial product as implying any sort of guarantee of performance has always baffled me. (You only have to think back to War Loan or indeed gifts for most of the post-war period to realise that the last person you should ever buy a financial promise from is a democratically elected government, which is prone

to expensive inflationary habits).

Most of what the Government had to say in its consultation document this week was, however, admirable common sense. What it is trying to promote is what every consumer should want – which is low cost, trustworthy, financial savings products where they have some assurance they will not be ripped off. The biggest talking point was its proposal to make the benchmark standards for equity-based funds so restrictive. Its proposal is to allow only index-tracking funds and funds which offer single pricing (as opposed to the traditional unit trust bid-offer spread) to qualify. No actively managed funds, therefore, and – equally surprisingly – no investment trusts at all (even index-tracking funds). The Government has yet to spell out the kind of management fee it has in mind for ISAs, but it seems to be thinking in terms of a 1 per cent annual fee.

Well, high-minded it may be, but it is hard to think of a more calculated affront to the marketing departments of the fund management industry. Unit trusts in particular are used to charging much higher fees on average for their actively managed funds (and profiting hugely from them),

and have been looking forward to pitching into the new ISA market with gusto. No wonder that Mr Warland was so affronted. Heavens, before long the Government will be saying that the average actively managed unit trust does not offer good value for money. And where we would be then?

Well, regular readers of this column will not be surprised to hear me say that I think the Government is on the right track, at least as far as this element of its plans is concerned. For someone who has made the decision to invest in the equity market for the medium to long-term period, then an index-tracking fund is the first place that he or she should think about putting their money.

Not necessarily the only place, mind you, but definitely the first place. In fact, with charges where they are today, I would go so far as to say that the Government would be irresponsible if it implicitly or explicitly tried to steer such a person into most actively managed funds in those circumstances.

Given that the whole point of ISAs is meant to be to encourage people who do not ordinarily save at all to do so for the first time, then the case for sticking to index funds is a

powerful one. (Of course it is always open to the industry to try and come up with an actively managed fund which is as cheap as a tracker fund – since if my reading of the consultative document is right, it is the value of money that is as much sticking point for actively managed funds as the underlying principle of how they are run).

By its own lights, therefore, the Government has probably acted sensibly. But that will not be enough to stop it running into a wall of flak from an industry that has realised the danger of being excluded from a great potential marketing opportunity – nor from unhappy wealthier savers who have profited nicely over the years from the PEPs and Tesco's experience and would understandably like to continue the experience. Whether the Government is wise to start meddling in this issue at all, however, is quite another matter.

It is creating a lot of rods for its own back – and one has to wonder whether it will come to regret trying to be prescriptive at all in this potential minefield. With the stock market where it is, the potential for trouble ahead is huge. Let nobody accuse Mrs Liddell of lacking courage, however.

## LOOSE CHANGE

The cost of borrowing is still falling. The Prudential yesterday cut its personal loan rates to 11.7 per cent APR on amounts over £1,000, and 12.7 per cent on amounts from £5,000 to £10,000. Loan offers go as low as £1,000 where the interest rate is 17.9 per cent. The Prudential has replaced its existing range of fixed-rate mortgages with new offers charging up to 0.2 points less than the existing series. New rates include 4.95 per cent fixed for two years, 5.7 per cent for three years up to 90 per cent of the property value and with no penalties for redemption after the fixed-rate term.

Fixed-rate mortgages are still coming down in cost. In the past few days Abbey National has replaced its existing range of fixed-rate mortgages with new offers charging up to 0.2 points less than the existing series. New rates include 4.95 per cent fixed for two years, 5.7 per cent for three years up to 90 per cent of the property value and with no penalties for redemption after the fixed-rate term.

Nationwide has cut rates by up to 0.3 per cent on its new two-, three-, five- and 10-year fixed-rate mortgages, which now cost 5.19 per cent, 5.69 per cent, 5.89 per cent and 6.49 per cent respectively for customers moving home (mortgagors pay a touch over 7 per cent). Nationwide, like most of its rivals, now charges redemption penalties for loans paid off early, eg within five years on a two-year fix, within six years on a three-year fix and within seven years on a five-year fix. A £25 fee and Nationwide's insurance are also needed to get the lowest rates.

## MONEY & ETHICS

### You can keep your ethical stance in your portfolio

The range of ethical funds keeps growing, and performance figures show that what is good for your conscience need not be bad for your bank balance, says Iain Morse

According to Fleur Leach, ethical fund manager at Albert E. Sharpe: "The option of buying an ethical share portfolio is neglected by many private investors, who perhaps don't realise it is available."

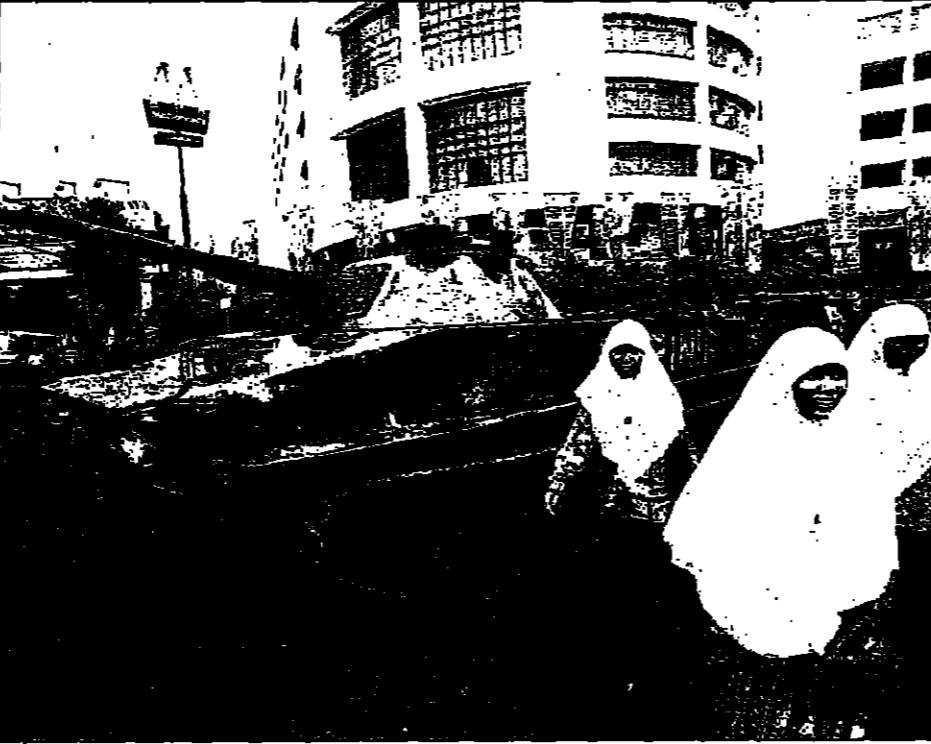
Understanding the differences between these types of investment approach is a good starting point for anyone who wants to build up an ethical portfolio.

Unit trusts are "pooled investments" where a fund is set up under a legal trust, which specifies the range of shares and other types of financial instrument that can be bought or sold by the fund managers. These are "open-ended" funds: new money buys new units, and if you want to realise your holding you must redeem its value from the fund trustees.

The cost of such investments, including any commission payable to a broker, comes out of the bid/offer spread, or difference between the price at which you buy a unit and redeem its value back again. Most ethical unit trusts have spreads of between 5 and 6 per cent. Scottish Equitable comes top with 6.51 per cent, while newcomer Standard Life has cut its spread to just 3.39 per cent.

Annual management charges for ethical unit trusts are usually between 1 and 1.5 per cent, although Equitable Life has reduced this to just 0.5 per cent and Standard Life is on the low side at 0.95 per cent. City Financial Acorn ethical is top charger at 1.75 per cent.

With the exception of Abbey



Arms dealing? No thanks. If this is your view, there are several options for investment

Life's ethical unit trust, all of those available can be purchased in a PEP wrapper. Minimum initial investments range from £500 to £1,000. Most allow additional top-up payments of between £100 and £250. Some also offer monthly savings plans ranging from just £25 a month with Abtrust, up to £100 a month with Friends Provident.

The ethical investment trust sector is narrow, with just three providers, Friends Provident, Jupiter, and Commercial Union. Of these, Friends Provident runs the largest with an asset value of around £33m, but

recent performance has been lacklustre.

According to David Bromige, of ethical IFA Bromige & Partners, the first step in fund selection is "getting a very clear idea of which areas an investor wishes to avoid and any they wish to support. This should leave a shortlist of unit trusts acceptable to them."

The best source of information on these funds, "Money & Ethics", comes from the Ethical Investment Research Service (EIRIS). This analyses each fund in terms of negative criteria investment areas they avoid, and

positive criteria areas they support.

Because of screening, most ethical funds hold a high proportion of shares in small and medium-sized companies. The yield or income derived from such shares tends to be on the low side.

"Shares in large, mature companies often have low price to earnings ratios," explains Ms Leach, "rewarding shareholders with high dividends as much as the prospect of capital growth. Smaller companies, particularly those seeking to grow rapidly, will need to keep their profits to fund expansion."

This means that most ethical funds are run for growth, not income. Both Friends Provident and NPI offer income funds, but the gross yields on these fall below average yields available from non-ethical income funds.

Mr Bromige thinks the best way round this for investors is to "buy funds for growth, use your annual capital gains tax allowance, and plan to realise some of your gains each year by encashing units."

For the ethically minded with larger sums to invest – typically £100,000 or more – a number of fund managers offer discretionary portfolio management services. Credit Suisse is a leader in the field, with an individually tailored portfolio.

If you want to buy and manage your own portfolio of shares EIRIS offer a share screening service, selecting stocks according to negative and positive criteria. But subscribers will have to do their own research on which shares they then buy or sell, unless they go to a stockbroker for further advice. Albert E. Sharpe offers this facility, with annual management charges of 1 per cent of portfolio value, plus dealing costs and commissions.

Contact EIRIS on 0171 735 1351 for information on their guide "Money & Ethics".

The Independent has produced a free 28-page "Guide to Ethical Finances" by Nic Cicuti, the paper's personal finance editor, and sponsored by Friends Provident. Call 0800 214487, or fill in the coupon on page 4.

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# The spoils of war: the cat, the house, and now the pension

It is no longer just the obvious material assets that have to be divided up by divorcing partners, says **Gwenda Joyce-Brophy**.

Often the pension has more value than the joint property equity

Divorce may be becoming more commonplace, but the financial issues and conundrums it throws up in its wake, if anything, are becoming increasingly complex. A combination of factors are at work. The average age at divorce for both men and women is now mid to late thirties, precisely a stage in life when many couples have accrued assets of varying value and liquidity – as well as liabilities and responsibilities. Superimposed on this demographic fact are the far-reaching implications of changes to the law relating to the role of pensions as an asset in divorce.

The Pensions Act of 1995 represented a sea-change, and pension funds now have to be considered in a divorce. While "who gets the house" was once the overriding issue, "what happens to the pension?" is now equally pertinent. Indeed, if there is little equity in the matrimonial property, the pension may be the most valuable asset.

Currently courts can earmark – set aside – a share of a spouse's pension. Because of vexed issues such as the pension holder dying before retirement age and the question of remarriage, judges often prefer to compensate using other assets to offset loss of pension rights. Pension splitting, a cause which the group Fairshares in particular has relentlessly championed, is where the allocated pension share remains in the scheme, and April 2000 seems to be the likely date for this to take effect.

Meanwhile, those embarking on divorce are already finding that issues such as the valuation of pensions can be a quagmire in which even their solicitors can find themselves floundering. Yet as Fairshares' Dawn Bennett notes: "The decisions you will make during your divorce are absolutely crucial for your future. That is why it is vital to get advice, and to make sure that pensions, for example, are valued properly."

**'The decisions you make during your divorce are crucial for your future. It is vital to get advice, and to make sure that pensions are valued properly'**

It is no surprise then that many of those involved in divorce, both personally as well as professionally, have been increasingly looking for sources of specialised financial help. "We have seen the volume of demand for this sort of service growing steadily over the past few years, particularly among women, and it is the area of pensions that has seen increasing demand for our specialist advice, from solicitors also," says Mark Ormerod of Hill Martin Financial Management Group. Keith Brown, an independent consultant at NJS Services in Kent, has also noted additional enquiries from solicitors.

Regulations in 1996 laid down that the value of a pension be the "cash equivalent transfer value" (what the holder would be paid if he were to transfer it to another pension fund). This can understate its real value, many experts believe, and pension valuation remains a difficult issue.

One group, The Divorce Corporation, specialises solely in pension valuation. "It is a very complex area. All pension valuations involve making a number of assumptions, and, depending on those assumptions you can come out with very different results," says the corporation's Keith Poplewell. In one instance, using different assumptions, valuations of £20,000 and £10,000 were obtained for the same pension.

The CETV approach can underestimate the value of a pension for a variety of reasons, and you have to make sure that death in service and loss of widow's pension are taken into account."

NJS's Keith Brown says: "I think people are still unaware of the implications of the Pensions

Act when it comes to divorce despite the prolonged political arguments surrounding it. In particular they seem unaware of the implications it may have on their own retirement funds and how much it would cost to replace those funds.

"We also see a lot of confusion about earmarking and splitting and I am not sure that a solicitor alone should be advising on this area. It is times like these that it would be sensible to see advisers and solicitors working together in the client's interests". The Divorce Corporation in fact only works on instruction from solicitors.

You can't expect solicitors to do the impossible – pension valuation is becoming a profession in itself, says Mr Poplewell, a view reinforced by family solicitor Jane Simpson of solicitors Manches and Co who sometimes uses the services of financial groups. "Expert pension advice will become even more important because of the flexibility that the Family Law Act will provide when it is implemented in late 1999 or 2000.

With all the emphasis on pensions it is easy to give other assets scant attention, or to see pensions as an issue in isolation when it is one part of a financial profile that needs to be considered whole. "We work together with the solicitor to ensure the client is made aware of the potential pitfalls regarding the various assets in order to navigate the most suitable course", says Keith Brown. "For example, if there is an endowment mortgage, should it be assigned to one partner only, or surrendered or sold? In addition, when we do review the policies in place these often a wish from the client to stop all plans including savings plans and life cover originally intended to be of benefit to children.

There is sometimes little discussion as to who will take financial responsibility for these plans, and as a result, neither partner does. This can lead to perfectly good plans being surrendered when with some discussion this could be avoided". Strategic planning is something that Mr Ormerod of Hill Martin believes is one of their key roles. "For example, we will advise on investment strategies that deal with income requirements for the future."

While the solicitor's role is in negotiating a settlement, that settlement needs to be used in the most efficient way. "Some people for whom we act often have little experience of financial management or investment. If we achieve for them a clean break which includes a lump sum payment for investment to provide income, then that has to be managed carefully," says Jane Simpson.

Obtaining extra, specialised advice costs money. Rates will vary, with some services offering one-off fixed fees for specific services as in the case of the Divorce Corporation, while others are charged by the hour. Mr Ormerod at Hill Martin believes it is vital that the client receives independent advice on a fee basis. "Clients are vulnerable to being sold products," he says. "What people sometimes forget is that we can and do actually save clients money," argues Keith Brown. "We look to the financial group to do the things a solicitor does not and cannot do, for example give investment advice, or things it can do more cost-effectively, for example preparing a financial budget," says Jane Simpson.

In terms of choosing one: "Ask your solicitor if he or she has direct experience, particularly of the financial adviser's results," advises Jane Simpson. "In addition to results, we also look for where an adviser and his or her team deal with the client sensi-

tively and patiently, as well as for flexibility and dependability".

*The Divorce Corporation: 0114 262 0616 (pension valuations for solicitors). Fairshares: 01788 570585. Hill Martin Financial Management Group: 0171 233 2777 (London Office), 0117 927 1500 (Bristol Office). NJS Consultants: 01689 850445. Manches and Co: 0171 404 4433.*

*The Which Guide to Divorce has chapters on Financial Planning for Divorce and Pensions. £10.99 post free, call 0800 252 100.*



Split down the middle: Kathleen Turner and Michael Douglas in 'The War of the Roses' probably didn't pay enough attention to their joint pension

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In the old days, you bought an estate car for a simple reason: you needed more boot space than a saloon. It was a utilitarian vehicle, as all good cars should be.

Sure, there was a tiny bit of pretension – after all, the very term "estate" conjured up images of the idyllic rustic lifestyle so adored by the English. Old-fashioned estates were sometimes known as "shooting brakies" to suggest scenes of Edwardian shooting parties, with a James Mason-like character as your titled host. None the less, estate cars were born to lug loads which saloons simply could not accommodate.

How different things are now. Pop into your local dealer and you'll be shown small estates, sports estates, luxury estates, lifestyle estates and – the newest fad – off-roading estates. Even the police choose estate cars as chase cars nowadays and, a few years back, Volvo used one of its estate models to compete in the British Touring Car Championship.

Four very different estates have passed through my hands recently. First up was one of the recently revised Mercedes C class.

This is known, in motor-industry-speak, as a lifestyle estate. It's more of a giant hatchback than a true estate, and it's aimed at people with busy, sporty lifestyles who need space for skis and tennis rackets but don't spend much time at B&Q or in antique shops. Other lifestyle estates include the BMW 3-series touring, the Volvo V40 and the Audi A4 Avant. None has a big carrying area, which is a polite way of saying that, although they may be good big hatchbacks, they are not good estates.

Next up was the Volkswagen Passat Syncro V6 estate, the top model in the new Passat estate range. Although not as roomy as an old-style Volvo estate, it has a much better standard of finish, and drives much better. If I wanted a new estate I'd buy a Passat, but not the Syncro V6 model, which at £25,000 is rather pricey.

Stick with one of the turbodiesel or petrol front-drive models, and feel smug every time you see a far pricier, but no better, Mercedes or Volvo pass by.

A Volvo V70R AWD came next. This is a Volvo estate unlike any other Volvo estate, more motorway racer than protective shell for motorists of a nervous disposition. The standard V70 is Britain's best-seller, the stylish heir to the old green wellie, labrador and luvvy type of Volvo.

But in V70R AWD (for All Wheel Drive) mode it epitomises New Volvo, a firm fast breaking away from its "sensible shoes" image and eager to make the motoring equivalent of multi-coloured air-cushioned trainers. The V70R AWD is a Ferrari wearing family car clothes. I loved it, even though I thought it was crazy. One minute you're carrying pots and plants back from the garden centre, feeling all green and virtuous and awfully sensible; the next you're revving that turbocharged powerhouse of a motor around the red line and racing away from the traffic lights like a kid driving your first sports car.

There is nothing sporty about the Subaru Forester, one of the first of the new-breed of off-roading estates. These offer some of the go-anywhere virtues of a Land Rover – by dint of their high ground clearance and four-wheel drive – but, being based on normal estates, they are more car-like on Tarmac. Volvo has just launched a rival (the V70 XC); BMW and Audi will soon have their own go-anywhere estates.

This proliferation has had one unusual casualty, however. Sales of the really big, commodious estates – which put carrying capacity before style – are evaporating. Volvo is to announce that its upcoming new big car, the S80 – successor to the 940 – won't be offered in estate form.

The traditional square-back substance-before-style Volvo estate is dead.

Huge carrying capacity, it seems, is the one thing estate car buyers no longer demand.



Colossal thrust from the supercharged 4.0-litre V8 catapults the XKR from 0-60mph in 5.2 seconds. The fastest production jaguar ever comes in coupe form, left, or convertible, below

## Like a cat out of hell

Road test Jaguar XKR, by John Simister

Some say Jaguar's XKR isn't all it could be. Too soft, they declare, too much the image-enhancing boulevardier, not enough the driver-uplifting performance machine. It's fast, of course, and it looks curvaceous in the old Jaguar sports-car idiom, but it's no Nineties E-type. And they have a point.

Jaguar's engineers have always known this. When the XKR's V8 engine was unveiled two years ago, the project engineer Martin Joyce told me tales of wild XKR engines that had concocted for various bizarre tests. "Some had open exhausts, and they sounded rather good. We're all petrolheads at heart here." Clearly, they were itching to create a truly sporting, hard-edged XKR, a car to show the world that Jaguar still knew how to do it instead of living on past glories. And now, with a year and a half's sales success behind it, the XKR has been force-fed some power food and sent to the gym.

The result is the Jaguar XKR, its 4.0-litre V8 engine's power pumped up by a supercharger, its suspension and steering made firmer, its rear tyres made stickier, its brakes made stronger.

You can recognise an XKR by its stainless steel mesh front grille, the E-type-like louvres on its bonnet, the 10-spoke wheels and the slim spoiler on its boot. Together, they signal the most ballistically rapid production Jaguar there has ever been. Peak power of 363bhp is why, plus a monstrous 372lb ft of pulling ability. The standard ZF transmission isn't strong enough to cope, so Jaguar buys its XKR units in from Mercedes-Benz.

The interior is unchanged from the XKR, although some of that car's sportier options are standard in the XKR. One of these is the Computer Active Technology Suspension (Cats), which automatically stiffens under acceleration, braking or cornering. The settings are modified for the XKR to give a crisper, sportier feel, helped further by firm and precise steering. You can properly sense what is going on under the wheels when you're cornering quickly, the better to enjoy the sort of agility and wieldiness you never quite get in the XKR.

This is as well, because things happen quickly when the supercharger is blowing hard into the engine. An electronic limiter is supposed to stop

the Jaguar from straying beyond 155mph, assuming you ever have the chance; without it, 170mph or so would be possible. Such speeds are merely the by-product of vast power matched to gearing that's designed for serenity and reasonably economical cruising at more normal speeds.

If the mood takes you, you can scorch to 60mph in 5.2 seconds. Just switch off the traction control, push the accelerator to the floor and let colossal thrust and the automatic transmission do the rest.

You can overtake almost anything, engine whooping then building to a cackle the way V8s do, supercharger humming. You can choose a "sport" setting for the autobox, or select the five gears man-

ually, but there's no point. Leave it to its own devices, let it slip seamlessly from gear to gear. I have never experienced a better automatic.

The power, the roadholding and the handling make the XKR as thrilling a big-hearted companion as you'll find this side of a Ferrari. It's a comfortable one, too, with its leather-trimmed cabin, CD player, air-conditioning and acreage of wood. It comes either as natural walnut or lacquered in translucent black, which would be my choice.

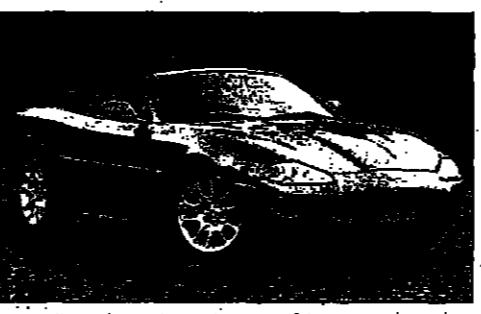
The other choice is between coupé and convertible. Either way, you won't find a more stimulating route to automotive relaxation. The XKR does all the things a Jaguar should, but it does them with a track-racer's edge. An E-type for the Nineties? Maybe. One of the most exciting and satisfying GT cars you can buy? That's nearer the mark.

close to the XKR, supercharged but uses a jaguar-based six-cylinder engine. You pay for hand-built exclusivity, but it doesn't buy you a better car.

BMW 840Ci: £57,470. Cheaper than jaguar, but not as fast, or as enjoyable to drive. Looks

dramatic but is growing old now.

Porsche 911: from £64,650. Latest 911 is a truly exciting drive, more "physical" than jaguar but less comfortable. Like DB7, can be had with manual transmission.

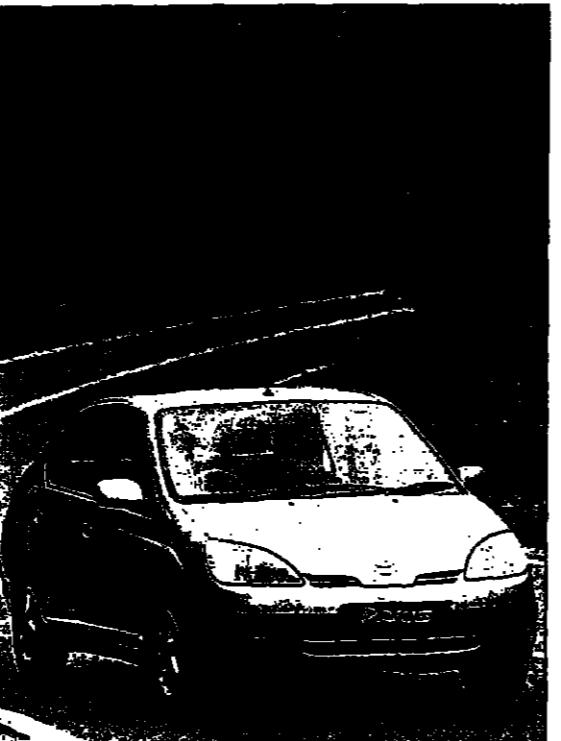


JAGUAR XKR – Specifications  
Prices: £59,300 (coupe), £66,300 (convertible).  
Engine: 3996cc supercharged V8, 32 valves, 363bhp at 6,150rpm.  
Transmission: Five-speed automatic gearbox, rear-wheel drive.  
Performance: top speed 155mph.  
0-60 in 5.2sec, 15-20mpg.

Rivals  
Aston Martin DB7: £84,950. Conceptually

## Where there's fire without smoke

The Japanese hybrid Prius is the best option for pollution-free motoring, says James Rupper



Toyota's Prius boasts twice the fuel efficiency of conventional petrol-engined vehicles

I'm a lapsed member of the Battery Vehicle Society, and it is not hard to find out why. Although it is a worthy aim to find an environmentally clean way to power your next car, battery technology just isn't up to speed at the moment. Range is limited, the batteries are heavy, and although charging them may be a simple process, finding somewhere to plug in when you roll to a halt on the M25 is going to be difficult. So until the technology can offer the performance, range and practicality of a petrol engine, electric power will be as dead as a flat battery.

However, Toyota think they may have come up with a solution by combining a conventional petrol engine with a silent electric one. They have given this working car a name, Prius, and put it on sale, but only in Japan.

The Prius manages to achieve twice the fuel efficiency of conventional petrol-engined cars,

offering at least 1,000 kilometres from a tankful of petrol. It also cuts HC, CO and NOx emissions on the road to a tenth of those allowed under stringent Japanese regulations.

How does it work? Well, squeezed under the bonnet is a light, efficient and low-revving 1.5 litre petrol engine. That is joined to a gear train that acts as a clever automatic transmission. Finally an electric motor and generator fits on the other end to complete the hybrid package.

The key to the mechanical efficiency of this system is the electronic control of power to ensure that energy is conserved. The engine runs at an optimum 4,000 revs per minute and its main function is to drive the wheels, but any excess output is used to recharge the batteries.

The batteries are also recharged by regenerative braking: when the brakes are applied the energy from the wheels is transferred to the batteries. In turn, the batteries supply extra power via the electric motor when required for ascending a hill, or overtaking. In situations where the engine cannot run efficiently, or produces high emissions, for instance when the car is at a standstill in traffic, then it is switched off altogether.

So what is it like in practice? Impressive. The Prius is just like a conventional car, but quieter. In the cabin you turn the key and hear nothing so harsh as a rumbling engine, or even the hum of an electric motor.

The Prius is definitely a car you can live with, though the brakes are fierce and the steering too light, a combination of the regenerative brakes and Japanese specification. It is at home in an urban and light commuter setting, but coped

competently on the motorway with equivalent performance to a Toyota Corolla 1.6 automatic. (100mph top speed) but greater frugality, with the potential of more than 70 miles per gallon.

The interior is roomy, especially for rear seat passengers. The dashboard is interesting with mainly digital instrumentation and a video screen display that works the stereo and a satellite navigation system, and even shows you which motors are supplying the power. Despite there being a battery pack positioned behind the rear seats, the boot is usefully deep.

Hybrid cars have been talked about for too long. Prototypes have been quietly forgotten about. Not only does the Prius styling look good but the package is sensible, and the hybrid power route means that nationwide outdoor three-pin plugs are not required. However, Battery Vehicle Society purists might question the value of having two motors and the use of air-conditioning.

For the moment the Prius is the best and only alternative the Japanese have got. There is a three-month waiting list, and I was told by a spokesman to expect an announcement soon. Toyota certainly wouldn't go to all the trouble of flying half a dozen cars over just to show off.

In Japan it sells for the equivalent of £10,000, and Toyota are rumoured to be subsidising each car to the tune of £20,000. It is unlikely to sell for anything near £10,000 in Britain.

Prius may not be the answer to environmentally friendly motoring, but it is a start. In the meantime I'm going to start the Hybrid Vehicle Society. Anyone else want to join?

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# The pleasure principle goes commercial

Urban living is in and suddenly redundant industrial buildings are becoming the most covetable of homes.

**Robert Liebman**  
sizes up the options

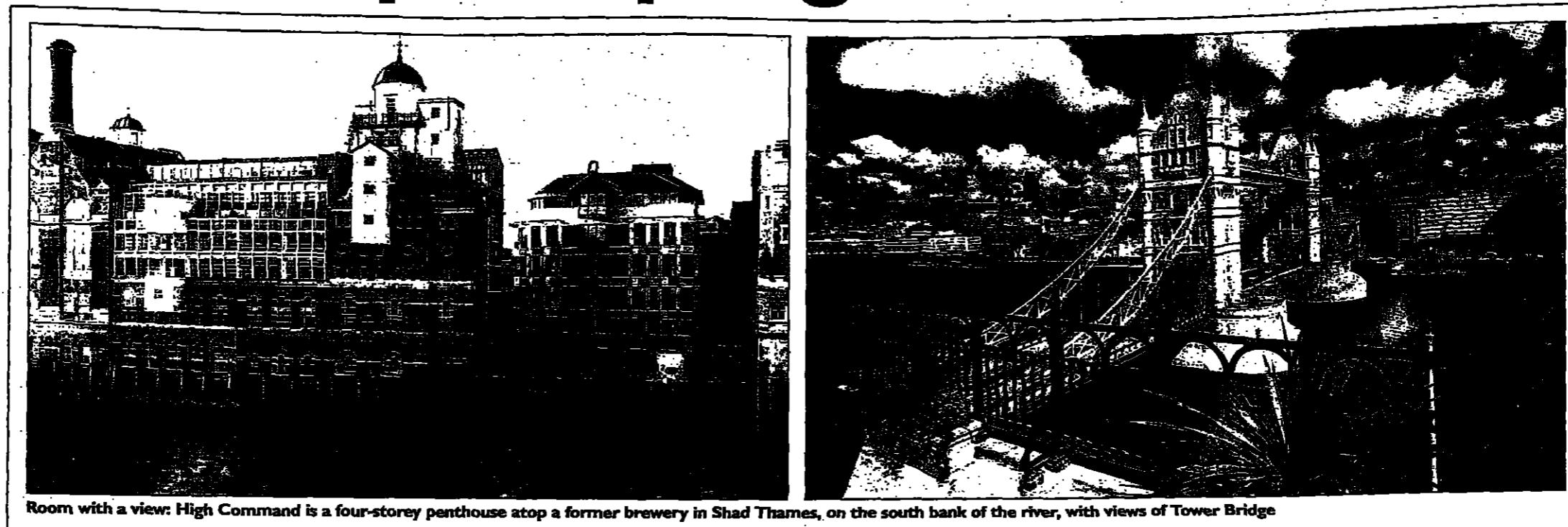
Throughout the UK, formerly commercial riverside and canal-side locations are being used for new housing. In or near city centres developers are offering unusually large residences forged out of disused or obsolete warehouse or office buildings.

It is not just waterside areas and not just London that are affected. Significant new developments are rising both in and near Manchester and Leeds, for example. Ambitious plans for Birmingham city centre call for mixed developments in which modern residences will be interspersed with ultra-modern leisure and retail facilities.

The most expensive of the new apartments and town houses, especially in London, will be within the reach only of those whose bank balances resemble a phone number. Outside London, however, loft apartments are available for less than £50,000, and even within the capital the prices of many attractive or attractively located flats are competitive. Among other factors, economic turmoil in Asia is expected to have a moderating influence on prices here by knocking Asian buyers out of the market.

The sheer number of new urban developments reflects changing social priorities and historical patterns. Cities and city life are back in fashion. Certain kinds of building are out of vogue. The combination favours residential properties of unusual size in previously commercial locations.

These new developments are rising in a new mood says architect Bernard Hunt, a partner in the London firm of Hunt Thompson, which is designing Millennium Village. "We are beginning to realise



Room with a view: High Command is a four-storey penthouse atop a former brewery in Shad Thames, on the south bank of the river, with views of Tower Bridge

that dense urban living can be attractive. Developers are now able to sell a continental, metropolitan, urban life style," says Hunt. He also believes that society has become increasingly sybaritic, and many new developments are extending the pleasure principle to property.

The famous Harrods Depository fronts a large multi-building complex at Berkeley's Harrods Village which contains, among other structures, former Victorian soap and candle factories. Extending well back from the river, this gigantic development will contain townhouses as well as new and converted apartments. (Call 0181-741 7401 for details.)

Of the 133 luxury apartments in Barratt's Globe View by the City, near St Paul's Cathedral, 35 will be in a former riverside warehouse. The wholly new building will contain atrium and landscaped courtyard (0171-489 3933).

Shad Thames, on the south bank of Tower Bridge, Malt Mill Developments has refurbished a former brewery, the Anchor Brewhouse, and literally topped it

with High Command, a four-storey penthouse containing its own internal lift and views in all directions (0171-488 9586).

Persimmon's Thorpe's Yard in east London includes a converted warehouse in addition to six new four-storey townhouses, and a new-plus-old warehouse conversion including an atrium and penthouses (0171-680 9990).

Four imposing buildings also comprise St George's Locks Wharf. At its peak are duplex double-height penthouses the windows of which are so large at to make the apartment appear glass-walled (0171-531 6280).

Similarly massive windows adorning oversized penthouses are the outstanding features of the four-building 322-apartment Canary Riverside complex, which will be Canary Wharf's first residential development (0171-512 9393).

Bellway's Boardwalk includes several dockside apartment buildings and town houses in which oversized windows are also a prominent feature (01245-259989). Terraces and a wrap-around penthouse typify Gal-

liard's Old Bell City at Westferry Road, which includes a semi-circular terrace of town houses bookended by complementary apartment blocks (0171-515 1939).

Marylebone Warwick Balfour (MWB) and Manhattan Loft have nabbed West India Quay, the sole remaining Grade 1 warehouse in Docklands to convert into apartments. This 106-unit conversion, which will contain studios as well as apartments and penthouses, will feature exposed brickwork, cast-iron window frames and flagstone floors (0171-537 0000).

For something completely different, several new developments in the West End are similarly orientated around luxury and pleasure in traditional urban settings. In Soho, Westcity Wates' 12 Bournthorpe Street is an ultramodern building with distinctive art deco architecture and minimalist interior design. Each of the 17 units, including two duplex penthouses, has either a balcony or a terrace and, to maximise light in the urban canyon, floor-to-ceiling windows (0171-267 2828).

Galiard has seen up the area around Waterloo Station with its massive Courtyard, behind County Hall, and similarly huge White House, near the South Bank. The approximately 150 apartments in the Courtyard include duplex and triple penthouses in two buildings linked by a six-storey glazed atrium (0171-633 0435). Plans for the White House tentatively include a business centre, fitness centre and restaurant (0800 908 921).

At Vincent Square in Westminster, 69 apartments and penthouses comprise Nicholson Estates' Atrium. According to the developer, "the internal layout of each apartment is designed to give the maximum possible exposure to open views over Vincent Square or the landscaped inner gardens" (0700 464246).

Overlooking Russell Square, the same developer's massive Bloomsbury Mansions, in a former government Department of Health facility, contains resident parking, Jacuzzi, sauna and gym building. Duplex penthouses contain conservatories and terraces.

The Piper Building in Fulham was post-war plug ugly when it was built.

which was fine with its owner, British Gas. Try Homes is sprucing up this architectural playput and converting it into a true, if unusual, luxury residence. Double-height ceilings will enable many apartments to have spacious mezzanine decks. The residents will also benefit from roof terraces, of which this edifice – with a large extension supported by stilts – will have more than its share (Savills, 0171-824 9030; Egerton, 0171-584 7020).

Rialto's Astral House in the West End also features roof terraces to some apartments (0800 0181 515).

For panoramic cityscapes, head for the hills. The centrepiece of Pamilon's Inverforth House in Hampstead is the former home of Lords Inverforth and Leverhulme. Here, too, the developer divided the building into seven apartments and two wings, maximising the views over London and the Heath. Inverforth homes range in size from 2,150-7,600 square feet (Goldschmidt, 0171-435 4404; FPDavills, 0171-472 5000).

Also in Hampstead and also with panoramic views, Mount Ver-

non is a four-building complex being developed by MWB and Sincere with apartments and penthouses, the majority of which have a balcony, terrace or private garden (0171-431 2121).

People more interested in doing than watching might be interested in two Laing developments. North of the river is a 14-home development of five-bedroom homes adjacent to Finchley Golf Club in Mill Hill. To the south is Wimbledon Parkside, a large development of new buildings convenient for golf as well as tennis (0181-207 6000).

For a multi-level penthouse, allow, say, a million quid per level. But many of these apartments will sell for a lot less. Consider Millennium Village, where Countryside will head a consortium that will build more than 1,000 new homes. Some will be rentals, some will be shared-ownership, and some will be full ownership (01277 260000).

Many of these developments will be mixed with restaurants and cinemas, bars and boutiques. Some, like Millennium Villages, will also be mixed socially.

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## What's it like living above the shop?

Ginetta Vedrickas talks to people who have chosen the ultimate in urban living: a flat above a retail establishment

Friday evening queues outside fish and chip shops show that the pre-weekend fish ritual isn't just for Catholics. But for those lucky souls who live above the chippy the smell of frying fish isn't confined to Fridays - which leads to the question: what is the attraction of living over a shop?

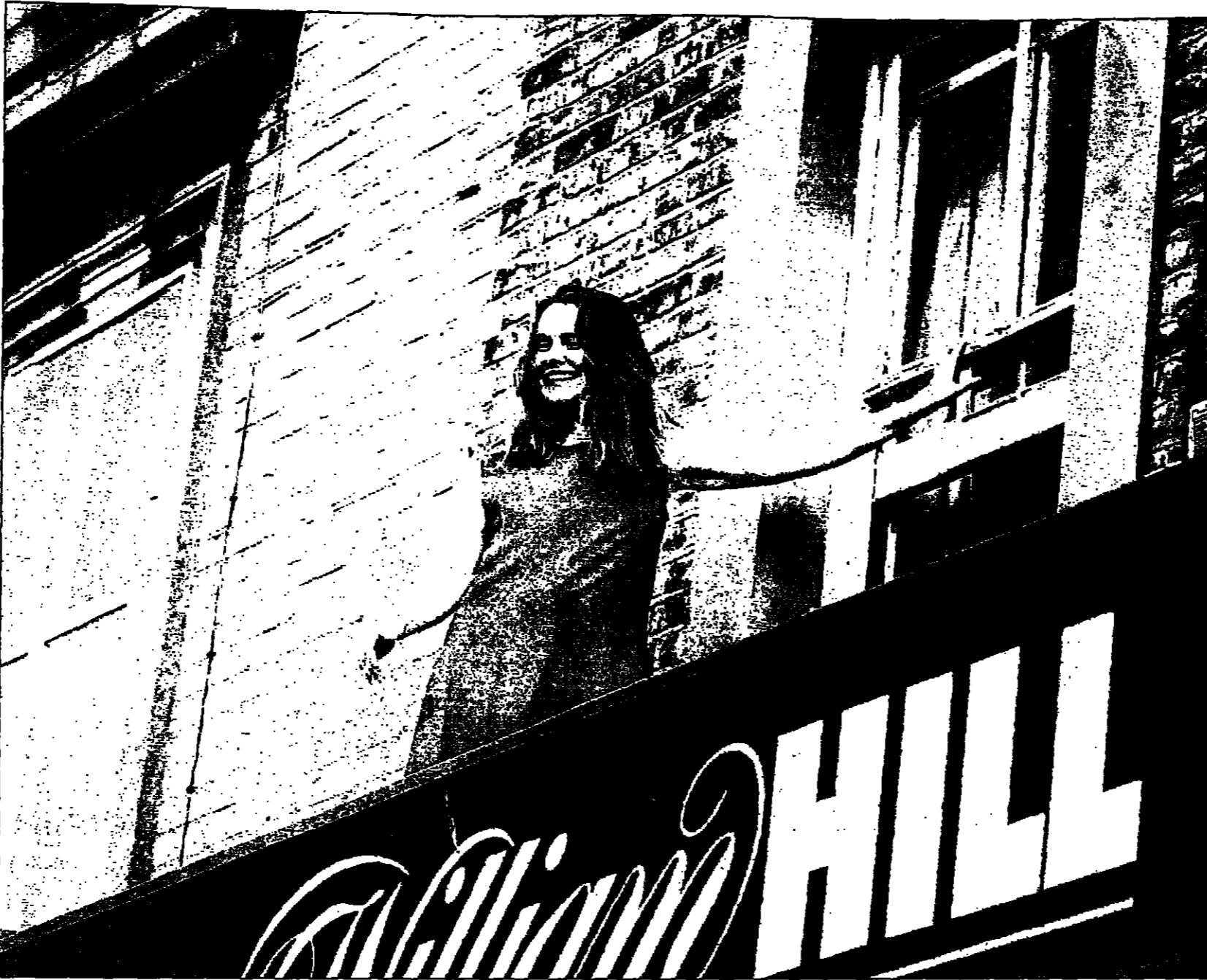
Paul Williams, negotiator for Holden Matthews estate agents, in Upper Street, Islington, north London, is currently marketing a two-bedroom flat on the Essex Road for £225,000. Unusually, the property has enormous roof terraces - one is 50ft long - yet it is also above a vacant shop, and so far there are no takers. "These flats tend to be on busy roads, and people worry because it can be an unknown quantity. Buyers should check planning applications to make sure there can be no A3 use," says Paul (for bureaucracy, A3 means "restaurant").

However, he advises buying property above shops for investment purposes. "You get a good yield for your money and a bit more space. You may not get the growth of other locales, but some tenants aren't fussy about their location."

Ninette Farache, director of HAM estates, in north London, finds that properties above shops do take longer to sell or let, but seasons play an important role. "Spring is the worst time to let, but in August you can rent out a shed." Ninette has a one-bedroom property for rent above her offices, but has had little success so far, is the estate agency itself off-putting?

Fellow agent Marcus Kemp, of King's Road, in central London, defends the profession: "At least we go home by 7pm. If the shop turns into a late-night video shop, then you've got a problem." Marcus has sold many properties in the popular King's Road, but some have proved harder than others. "A flat above a kebab shop was a nightmare," says Marcus, blaming high insurance premiums for buyers' reluctance, as flats above restaurants can face fire hazards. Mortgage companies pose further problems, with their traditional aversion to lending on these properties.

Marcus perceives two categories. "Mansion blocks over businesses sell well in contrast to



'And they're coming up to the third fence': for Stephanie West, living above a bookie's is a lot of fun, with few disadvantages

Photograph: Neville Elder

traditional little shops with flats above." The reasons seem obvious, yet Marcus holds an alternative view. "The benefits of living above a shop are enormous. In a block you can't do anything without annoying the neighbours but above a shop you can party all night long."

Walk around any high street with an eye to the spaces above, and you see them: dingy curtains, boarded windows, signs of neglected and forgotten spaces which are hard to visualise as homes. Housing associations and insightful local authorities have long developed policies to transform retail space into homes, but, with developers cashing in on the benefits, competition for space is tough.

Retailers must also be persuaded of the advantages. John Leit, assistant chief planner for the London Planning Advisory

Committee (LPAC), is convinced that one way to revitalise town centres - particularly at night - is to get people living in them again, and this would also make them more economically viable.

John also believes that the planning system should be more proactive: "I should shake up housing colleagues and the Chancery of the Environment."

LPAC is partly funding a

study, currently at draft stage, looking at potential capacity and demand in London for dwellings in over shops and the mechanisms necessary for improving them. The Civic Trust, which is being consulted for the study, has identified a need to promote the benefits for small shopkeepers and is considering incentives to encourage converting and refurbishing retail spaces. Some large retailers are already convinced. Martins Newsagents was paying

£250,000 in empty property rates and now finds it can get an annual rental income of £400,000 from the previously vacant space.

People living above shops seem to be divided in their enthusiasm. Stephanie West rents a two-storey maisonette above William Hill bookmakers in South London. The location sounds unappealing but the enormous roof terrace with its leafy views, and Stephanie's ardour, dispel any distaste you may have for urban living. Did she specifically choose a flat over a shop? "I absolutely lucked into this. I was in New York and was used to noise, 24-hour shopping and decent weather. I was dreading returning to London."

Stephanie arrived back with no cash (her last £50 went on quarantine fees for her Doberman pinscher); she found her "incredibly cheap" flat through a

friend. Three doors down from a Seven Eleven, she has all-night shopping; she also has occasional good weather. She takes full advantage of the situation.

"I can put my coat over my nightie, slip out and get a bottle of bubbly and a video and be back in bed within three minutes," says Stephanie, who has better plans for her disposable income than mortgage payments. She is minutes from her bank, a dry cleaner's, a delicatessen and restaurants: "People are always dropping in," she says. "It's just the most wonderful, convenient space; you can hop out and catch a bus or taxi within minutes."

Stephanie was single when she moved in but now lives with her partner Simon and son Alexander.

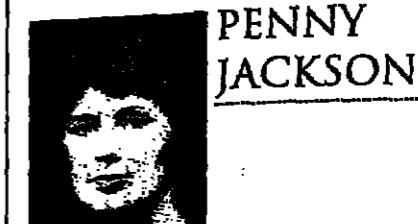
Are there disadvantages? "Living above a bookie's brings smoke and noise. And they're

coming up to the third fence!" shouts Stephanie, in a passable imitation. However, she prefers bookies to estate agents. "They employ young men with posh cars, so you can never park."

The family feels secure in their flat. "Alexander is adept at urban living and would never lurch off a pavement," she says, and the entrance is overlooked, which deters burglars.

Your safety may depend on the type of business below you.

A friend once spent several harrowing hours tied up with a gun at his head thanks to a raid on the sub-post office below his flat - but that's another story. Next time you're out shopping and spy a woman with a nightie under her coat, don't despair. She's not symptomatic of urban societal breakdown; she's part of that happy breed who live over the shop.



### PENNY JACKSON

#### Click and you're in the picture

The days when you have to rely on an artistically arranged corner of a room to gain an impression of the whole could be numbered. Imagination is no longer always necessary for those who hunt on the computer. With a click of the mouse you can turn 360 degrees and check out exactly what is in the room. Is the ceiling really that high? What kind of windows are they?

Winkworth, the London estate agents, have just launched a Walk Inside Tour in conjunction with IPIX. The IPIX technology - a form of digital photography - will be used with selected properties and the results so far have proved impressive. As yet Winkworth uses only text on its website, since not all agents have digital cameras, and browsers easily overlook something special without pictures to entice them.

A Georgian house on the Thames recently sold through the Walk Inside Tour to a buyer who had no intention of buying on that particular stretch of the river. But he was so struck by the whole look of the property that he offered a higher price than the one on the table from a local buyer. He was able to see the house from the inside and outside, back and front as well as getting views of the street and the Thames. Website: [www.winkworth.co.uk](http://www.winkworth.co.uk).

Rumours of a shortage of properties for sale are exaggerated, according to Mark Chick of Leslie Marsh & Co, from Notting Hill, one of London's hot spots. He sees supply running at an exceptionally healthy level, which will calm the nerves of all those fearful of putting their homes on the market in case they find themselves homeless.

"There is a constant temptation to play down supply, but the fact is our instructions are now nearly 50 per cent up on this time last year." Although they still can't keep up with demand, buyers can rest assured that something else will come up, adds Mr Chick.

Beryl might just be the answer for the odd weekend. She is a 70ft narrow boat moored on the Oxford Canal two miles from the city centre and is for sale for £40,000. For that you get a living area with stained-glass windows, portholes and paneling, and two sleeping cabins. There is a shower room and, in case anyone is getting too relaxed, a solid-fuel Rayburn to riddle out every so often. The agents are Cluttons Daniel Smith: 01865 793900.

## First, find your forgotten shell

Relics from another age offer scope for the sort of conversions that change unfashionable addresses into the haunts of film stars. Penny Jackson reports

A converted stable block and a church tower have more than their 18th-century origins in common. They are both in south London and carry a price tag of £1m. On the edge of Clapham Common, Robin and Caroline Totterman have created an oasis in Nightingale Lane. They have transformed the derelict building tucked away between flats, which briefly saw life as a restaurant, into a 3,200 sq ft home that combines all the appeal of a spacious loft with details of the old stables. Both refurbishments were a labour of love, taken on by enthusiasts who felt instinctively the potential of the buildings. Architects' ideas often clashed with their own and so they drew their own designs, keeping professional input to a minimum. They learnt the hard way and at times thought their ambitions had got the better of them.

When the Tottermans finally moved in, by now with a small baby, they were suddenly assaulted with horrendous smells. "We thought it was a gas leak, then the drains had no one could find anything. We also had problems with the electrics. In the end we took up the new floor and found that the open drains from the stables were letting in the smell from the sewers and rats were eating through the wires," recalls Robin. "We had to seal it and lay the whole of the ground floor again."

Since it is open plan and about 50 ft in

length, this was no small task. But despite this setback the house had begun to take shape. "We would sit and debate all the details with the builder as we went along," he says. "We became our own developers." It took a year for the purchase of the stables to be negotiated. They bought during the property doldrums and from an asking price of £500,000 they talked their way down to about a third of that.

"We walked past it every day and from the moment we walked in we knew it was just what we wanted," says Caroline. She is no stranger to design. Her background is in the theatre, as is that of her family - Oliver Reed, the actor, is her uncle - and she designed many of the visual merchandising campaigns for In-Specs, the trendy eyewear company founded by Robin. "We were clear we wanted a lot of space," they both say. In the courtyard outside the kitchen the original stable flooring has been restored. A spiral staircase leads up to a roof garden off a bedroom and a sauna sits in what was an outside passageway. Now it is on the market with a £1m price tag. "It was a labour of love," says Caroline. "We never imagined five years ago we would be selling it at this price."

Edward Caudwell, for the selling agents Aylesford, is seeing people moving south of the river who would never have dreamt of it a few years ago. "A million pounds is a psychological barrier, but when people realise they would be paying more like £3m in Chelsea, it isn't difficult to lure them out. I even blindfolded one buyer and drove him to Battersea. When he saw the house, he bought it." Even so, buyers will not be pushed into paying silly prices, he says.

In areas where houses are clearly in a different category from their neighbours, pricing can be difficult. Heather Poutefax, of FPD Savills, says that now precedents have been set in Wandsworth and



Stable life: Robin and Caroline Totterman say their conversion was a labour of love

Clapham comparisons can be made, but in the case of Gypsy Tower, the spectacular church-tower conversion, it is much harder.

Every morning, Michael Rubino noted the burnt-out church in Gypsy Hill as he drove past on his way to work. Three and a half years later the vision that gripped him when he first stopped for a look has become the reality that drew Madonna four miles south of fashionable London to inspect. It is on the market at £1.2m.

It would be unique in any setting. Rubino, an interior designer, and his business partner Michael Edwards-Hammond

bought the church from a frankly incredulous diocese for £13,000. "Nobody wanted it," says Edwards-Hammond. "English Heritage, who were dealing with it, thought we were mad."

Rubino, who had always wanted to live in a church, took control from day one and set about the task with a passion. "If I had known what it would involve I would never have started," he admits. As it is, he has created a home with all the features of a modern development - closed-circuit TV, a lift, sprinklers in every room - the romance of a roof-top garden overlooking London, and where taking a bath means looking up

through a glass roof to the summit of the tower. He hunted down wall lights in Italy, appropriate for the enormously thick walls.

Edwards-Hammond began to watch the finances nervously as expert restorers repaired the charred timber and stone and whatever could be salvaged from the arsonist's vandalism. The only floor in existence was in the belfry and that was "two feet thick in pigeon droppings". Now it is enclosed by 44 windows. Below, in the clock room, the exposed workings of the clock have been repaired by the original makers. "We spent £600,000 on it in the end," says

Edwards-Hammond. Madonna is not the only celebrity to show an interest. "When I was in America I showed the pictures to Cher over lunch. She loved the place. Can you imagine her living there? No one would expect to find her drinking in a wine bar in Gypsy Hill."

You wouldn't have to blindfold anyone to buy south of the Thames if Cher exchanged a Malibu address for SE19.

The agents for Nightingale Lane are Aylesford (0171-351 2383) and Douglas & Gordon (0171-924 2000); for Gypsy Tower, FPD Savills (0181-877 1222).

